

Manuale di Teologia Biblica

## PREFACE.



THIS work consists of lectures delivered by the late Dr. Lindsay Alexander to the students of the Theological Hall of the Congregational Churches in Scotland. The course of theological study in that institution extended over four years, in each session of which Dr. Alexander delivered lectures on one of the four divisions of theology given in these volumes. Although he held the post of Professor of Theology for the long period of twenty-nine years, he was in the habit of carefully revising and largely rewriting his lectures for each successive session, and those now printed were, for the most part, written by him during the last few years of his life, while those written at an earlier date show marks of careful revision. All of them may therefore be regarded as setting forth his matured views on theological subjects.

The imperfect arrangement of the author's MSS. and their voluminous extent have rendered it necessary for me to give to the work more editing than I could have wished. In the first place, I have taken the liberty of departing from the lecture-form of the MSS., and of arranging the matter in the form of chapters and sections, the latter being more convenient than the former to readers of a book, by enabling them to follow with facility the subjects treated when given in consecutive order. I have thus been able to omit the recapitulation with which Dr. Alexander was wont to preface each lecture. I have, however, endeavoured to supply the place of these recapitulations by giving headings to many of



the chapters and sections, and by using numerals to indicate the place of each section in its relation to the several parts of the whole work. In the Synoptical Table of Contents given at the end of the second volume, I have also endeavoured to furnish an abstract of all the subjects treated in their logical connection, which may be useful as an introduction to the study of the work in detail. These are all the additions I have made to Dr. Alexander's MSS., with the exception of detailed references to books, chapters, and verses or sections of Scripture, and of classical and theological authors which I have supplied where they have been omitted by the author. Had I felt free to do so, I might have added many more headings to sections and paragraphs throughout the work, so as to indicate clearly and fully the passage from one subject or argument to another, but I have preferred to supply these in the Synoptical Table, where they will be found in full.

In the second place, I have to note that I have been compelled to omit a large part of the matter of the MSS. in order to bring the work within the limits of two volumes. The only alternative to this was condensation of the matter, which I regard as not competent to an editor, but only to an author in dealing with his own work. In regard to the omissions, however, I have endeavoured to act under the guidance of the author himself, furnished in those indications given in several of his introductory lectures (selections from which form the Introduction to this work) of what he regarded as the main body of his teaching, and what he regarded as merely introductory or subsidiary to that. In the closing part of the Introduction it will be found that he aimed at the "construction of a Biblical rather than a Dogmatical or Ecclesiastical Theology." Accepting the Bible as a divine revelation, and as comprehending within it not only those truths peculiar to itself, but also all the teachings of nature concerning religion, he made it his chief aim to set forth in scientific form the doctrines of Scripture concerning God and man in their relations to each other. While recognizing the importance of the subjects usually treated under the head of Natural Theology, he regarded the dis-

cussion of these, and also of subjects bearing on the philosophical aspects of theology, as somewhat aside from his proper function as a teacher of Biblical Theology. Guided by the expression of his own views, I have therefore omitted all lectures on what may be called extra-Biblical subjects, and have found all the less difficulty in determining what subjects may be properly included under this head, because Dr. Alexander seldom failed to indicate, in a sentence or two, when he dealt with subjects of a subsidiary nature as distinguished from the main body of his teaching. Most of the lectures omitted fall under Parts I. and II., Theology proper and Anthropology. From Part I. the omissions are of lectures on "The Concept of God," and "The Existence of God," including discussions on the argument *à priori*, the historical, physical, anthropological, and teleological arguments, an outline of which will be found in Dr. Alexander's article on "Theology" in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Several lectures and parts of lectures on modern speculations regarding the origin, creation, and antiquity of man have also been omitted from Part II., on the ground of the lecturer's distinct intimation, that although he entered upon the discussion of these subjects for the benefit of his students, he regarded this as somewhat aside from his function as a teacher and expounder of the Biblical doctrine concerning man. Other omissions are noted and explained as they occur throughout the work. I feel bound to say, however, that notwithstanding these necessary omissions, I believe the lectures now published embody very fully and fairly Dr. Alexander's theological teaching, and that any advantage that would have accrued from the publication of all the matter of his MSS. would have been chiefly in the direction of amplified illustration and proof of the positions maintained in this work.

The reasons given for producing the work in the form of a treatise on Biblical Theology have also determined its title. It is a Biblical Theology in the sense, to use the author's own words, that it is an attempt to "collect and classify the different statements of Scripture so as to present the truth they teach in its purely Biblical form, and under the modifi-

cations which are peculiar to each writer;" and it is a "System" of Biblical Theology in the sense that the author has aimed at "a systematic and scientific expression of the contents and full meaning of what the Bible states only in germ, or loosely and popularly." I am aware that the designation "Biblical Theology" is used by some theologians in a sense different from that now given, but, in view of the ambiguity that attaches to the phrase, it may be sufficient to explain, as I have done, the meaning given to it in this work.

I desire to express my sense of obligation to Dr. Alexander's representatives, not only for consenting to the publication of these lectures, but also for the confidence they have placed in me, in leaving me full liberty to prepare the work in such a form as might, in my judgment, furnish an adequate presentation of his theological teaching. Whatever reception it may meet with, I have unhesitatingly accepted the responsibility of advising its publication; and although I could have wished the preparation of it for the press had been in abler hands, I have been moved to undertake the onerous duty of editor chiefly by the fear that by declining it the work might either have failed to be published, or publication have been unduly delayed. While I confess to the natural desire of a grateful and admiring student to have placed on record a memorial of some of the best work of a revered teacher, it is the high excellence of the work itself, and my conviction that it goes far to supply an acknowledged want at the present time, that have mainly weighed with me in seeking its publication. What many theological students and thoughtful religious persons are at present anxiously desiring, is such a statement of what the Bible teaches regarding the most important doctrines of religion as shall show neither the special pleading of writers who feel bound to defend the religious creeds and systems of the ecclesiastical body to which they belong, nor the bias of those who feel called on to write as the avowed opponents of what is usually regarded as orthodox doctrine. I claim for this work that it makes a near approach to supplying this want. It is no doubt true that the author had very pro-



nounced religious opinions and beliefs, and that these were mainly on the side of what is called the Calvinistic school of theologians; but the mental independence which he brought to the study of Scripture is, I think, sufficiently shown by his fearless rejection of some of the characteristic dogmas of both the strict and moderate schools of Calvinistic theology. Of the former he set aside as non-Scriptural the church or catholic form of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Eternal Generation of the Son and Procession of the Spirit, of Adoption, and accepted only in a modified form the doctrine of Imputation; while of the doctrines of the latter school, which have chiefly prevailed in the denomination to which he belonged, he set aside, as failing to be an adequate exhibition of the teaching of Scripture, the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement. His suggestive reference to what he calls the "ecbatic" aspect of the atonement is also proof of how carefully he sought to exhibit a doctrine more fully in harmony with all the statements of Scripture than that of either the strict Calvinistic or Moderate Calvinistic school. The open mind which he brought to the Divine Word is also strikingly shown, not only in the care with which he adduced in proof of his positions only those passages which could be shown to have a sound exegetical basis, but also in his decided rejection of passages which, although accepted by interpreters of high reputation as proofs of doctrines which both he and they held in common, he set aside as lacking exegetical validity. It ought to afford no small degree of satisfaction to a student of Scripture to feel that he has the aid of a teacher who makes it manifest that he has but one purpose before him—to set forth what Scripture teaches, neither more nor less; and who makes equally manifest his resolution to be moved from this purpose, neither by undue regard for traditional beliefs, nor by the desire to propound new theories of his own. I indulge the hope that a study of this work will exhibit the author as one who possessed these qualities in a high degree, and as one who, in regard to every religious theme that engaged his attention, sought to give a clear and accurate answer to the question, "What saith the Scripture?"

Although the fashion of dedicating books has now nearly passed away, I would fain inscribe this work to the memory of its honoured author, and to that of the esteemed colleague with whom he laboured in happy fellowship, and who has, with him, now entered on his reward; to his former colleague, now happily surviving; and to the students, now labouring in the ministry in many lands, who often recall, with devout gratitude to God, the invaluable service rendered to them by the beloved teacher who, sparing no labour, made abundantly manifest his affectionate and anxious solicitude on their behalf, that they might become faithful and able ministers of the Divine Word.

# INTRODUCTION.



## THEOLOGY.

1. THE word THEOLOGY is a designation compounded from the Greek, after the analogy of other words employed in modern usage to denote the scientific development of any department of knowledge. In all words in which the Greek λόγος is used, it is employed to designate the arrangement in a manner accordant with reason of the facts and phenomena belonging to the department described by the word to which it is appended. A "logy" of any subject is more than a mere description or general arrangement of what appertains to that subject; it is such an arrangement as is rational, as sets forth and illustrates the principles or general laws under which all belonging to that subject may be classified. Taken strictly, Theology may therefore be held to describe that portion of religious science which has to do with the being and perfections of God; and to this restricted sense some writers have proposed to confine it. In ordinary usage, however, its signification is much more comprehensive. As all religious ideas have to do immediately or indirectly with God, Theology, or the science of God, has been held to embrace within it the entire range of religious truth. It may be defined, therefore, as a summary of religious truth scientifically arranged, or as a philosophical digest of all religious knowledge.

2. As Theology is quite a general term, designating the scientific analysis and classification of religious principles, it may be applied to the systems of false religion as well as to that of the true. Hence we have books on the Theology of the heathen, on Muhammedan Theology, etc. As commonly used, however, the word is restricted to the religious system



contained in the Bible; and, accordingly, Systematic Theology, as usually understood, is a scientific arrangement and presentation of the religious truths taught in the word of God. Thus viewed, it stands closely connected with religion, which is a term that may be taken either objectively or subjectively. In the former application it embraces the mass of facts and principles which are the objects of study or belief to the religious mind; taken subjectively, it expresses the state of which that mind becomes the subject as percipient or credent of these facts or principles. Theology stands connected with both of these acceptations; with the former, inasmuch as it aims at the scientific construction of the truths which form the object of religious study and belief; and with the latter, in so far as it, by such construction, facilitates the production of that religious state of which the mind is the subject through the medium of these truths. It is obvious that it is only with religion in its objective application we have immediately to do. In the Bible we find a mass of spiritual truths which constitute the Christian religion; and what we have to do is to collect, compare, and classify these truths according to their inner connection, so as to evolve, so far as that is possible, a complete and systematic view of the Christian religion.

3. Theology is sometimes called Dogmatic, sometimes Speculative, and sometimes Polemic Theology. These terms have reference to the different aspects under which it may be viewed. As the truths with which it specially deals are principles held and taught as certain, it is dogmatic; as they are viewed not so much in their practical bearings as in their relation to each other as concepts of the mind, it is speculative; and as no man can lay down a system of theological truth without finding occasion to defend the views he unfolds against a multitude of conflicting and antagonistic views, it is polemical. Other designations are sometimes to be met with, such as Akroamatic (*διδασκαλία ἀκροαματική*), which has reference to its being taught orally in colleges or academies; and Catechetical, which has reference to its being presented in the form of a catechism, etc. But these designations are no longer in use.

4. The science of Theology as thus defined proceeds on the

assumption of certain facts or principles which it holds for true and legitimate. (1) It assumes that God and the things of God can be learned by us only through the revelation of them by God Himself to His creatures. (2) It assumes that the lessons taught of divine things by the works of God and by His word are in perfect harmony with each other; and this on the general ground that if both have proceeded from the all-perfect mind of God, it is impossible but that they should perfectly accord in the utterances they give concerning Him. (3) It is assumed in Theology that as all the phenomena of nature are alike authoritative, so all the statements of Scripture are alike to be deferred to as presenting to us the mind of God. This is assumed on the general principle that the Bible is the word of God, that all Scripture is *θεόπνευστος* — a principle, not, of course, to be assumed without proof, but the proof of which must be accomplished at a previous stage of the investigation.

5. The *object* of theological investigation being the written word of God, the proper *method* of that investigation has now to be considered. Starting from the assumptions already laid down, the theologian has to endeavour to construct into a harmonious and systematic whole the truths which he finds revealed concerning God and divine things. As by the very ground on which he professes to stand he renounces the idea of having to excogitate or devise a scheme of religious truth, and assumes to himself the office simply of an explorer of truth revealed, it is only by an inductive process that he can possibly gain his end, and it is therefore by the inductive method of inquiry that he is to build up the superstructure of his science. His first step in this process and by this method is the collection and verification of facts, these being the data from which all his conclusions are to be drawn. Careful scrutiny and the application of all the necessary tests of accuracy, together with copiousness of collection so as to draw the induction from the largest possible area, are indispensable in every scientific inquiry, and he who neglects these, though he may sometimes make a felicitous guess at truth, can never securely construct a system. As applied to Biblical investigation, this indispensable requirement of the inductive method means the copious collection of passages

bearing on the subject in hand, and the ascertaining, by the use of proper methods of interpretation, of the exact meaning of each in the connection in which it stands; for it is obvious that unless a passage be taken in its *true* meaning, its value as a proof passage is destroyed.

Having by a process of careful observation and scrutiny collected and verified his materials, the theologian has next to classify them according to their subjects; and having done this, he may proceed to compare and weigh those of each class, one with another, for the purpose of eliciting the great general truth which they in common express. In some cases he will find this done to his hand in the Bible; for as part of that book consists of theological discussion, it is only what may be expected, that in some instances, if not in all, we shall find the general truth to which a comparison of instances would lead us enunciated as a principle already ascertained, a theological dogma already proved. In this case the theologian may content himself by simply transcribing the scriptural dogma as a matter already settled; or he may proceed with it deductively, and show how it holds true in each of the instances on which it rests; or he may ignore for the moment the authoritative announcement, and build up analytically from these instances the dogma afresh for himself. Men will be determined which of these three methods to pursue very much, in all probability, by the peculiar habit of their own minds; but for scientific purposes I cannot but believe the third to be the preferable method. It is the method which the inquirer must pursue in all cases where the oracle does not authoritatively pronounce the conclusion at which he seeks to arrive. In this case his only resource is to compare passage with passage, and to educe as the general truth taught that which harmonizes with them all.

Now, it will be observed that whether we take a dogma enunciated in Scripture and reason down to its revealed elements, or take these elements and reason up to the dogma, whether enunciated in Scripture or not, we pursue a process purely logical in its character. The conclusion, therefore, ought to have all the certainty to which a logically-drawn conclusion is entitled. An error may be committed by the party conducting the process; but if the premises assumed by



him are authentic, and the process of reasoning legitimately conducted, it is impossible that the conclusion should be otherwise than correct. On this ground, then, theology may fairly claim to rank as a science; it consists of propositions which profess to be logically deduced from certain legitimate premises. Whether the premises assumed *be* legitimate and the reasoning strictly logical, is matter of fair inquiry; but when these conditions are satisfied, the conclusions of theology are as much entitled to be regarded as scientifically established as are those of the astronomer or the geologist.

6. Let us now consider for a little the *legitimacy* of such investigations in the department of divine truth. Here three cases may be supposed,—

(1.) There is the case of those truths in regard to which Scripture supplies us with both the general principle, or one containing whole, and the constituent parts. In this case it will not admit of question that the investigations of a theologian are legitimate, whether he pursue the synthetic or analytic method. In either case he simply studies with intelligence an express revelation. The containing whole and the constituent parts are in this case alike parts of revealed truth, and all that he does is to apprehend the connection between the two. Take one of Paul's lengthened arguments, for instance, in the Epistle to the Romans or the Epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> Each of these is a logical process of systematizing divine truth; and though stated popularly or rhetorically, it is nevertheless a logical process fundamentally, and is addressed as truly to the logical faculty as if it were as dry and formal as a page in Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas, and depends for its validity and full influence on the reader upon its being capable of being explicated in the accredited forms of logic, which are just the formal laws of human thinking.

(2.) The second case that may be supposed is that of truths not formally enunciated in a general form in Scripture, but the constituent parts or elements of which are clearly revealed to us. In this case we say it is the office of the theologian to reason inductively or analytically from the constituent parts to the constitutional whole; and we maintain such a

<sup>1</sup> [Throughout this work the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is assumed.—ED.]

process is perfectly legitimate, and for these reasons : (a) It is only carrying out a mode of investigation which the sacred writers have themselves employed. (b) Where God has been pleased to reveal to us all the constituent elements of a general truth, it seems only reverend and devout in us to elicit from these the truth they combine to constitute. (c) It seems vain to forbid this inductive process from the revelations of Scripture ; for it is simply impossible for any man to make himself familiar with the revelations and refrain from following it. Induction is simply the mind of the man thinking according to one of the great formal laws of thought ; and it is a natural impossibility for his mind to come under the conditions of the law and not obey it. If he apprehend the constitutive parts of a containing whole, he is as sure to obey the law of his mind by trying to apprehend the whole which they constitute, as a stone cast into the air is sure to return towards the earth's surface. Hence all men who read the Bible do instinctively form a system out of it, and do so by reasoning analytically from special instances to general principles or truths. In this they obey a law of nature ; and hence, instead of denouncing this, the wiser and better course is to teach them how to make the induction accurately. Theologians they *will* be, whether we will or not ; what ought to be chiefly aimed at is that they shall be as good theologians as possible.

(3.) The third case we may suppose is that of truths which are found stated in Scripture, or which may be legitimately elicited from scriptural statements implicitly contained in them, but of which the sacred writers do not make such full use as an application to them of a logical process of deduction may enable us to make. In other words, we may often be able to pursue a statement of Scripture into many conclusions of a doctrinal kind which are not themselves stated in Scripture. In this case we proceed synthetically and not analytically, reasoning down from general principles to special truths, instead of up from special truths to general principles. Without the application of this method it would be impossible to complete our theological systems. The question is whether we are at liberty to use such a method of investigation in dealing with Scripture.

In answer to this it seems natural to observe that if we may employ one method of logical inquiry in order to ascertain divine truth, we may no less legitimately use another and equally accredited method. As the inductive and deductive processes include the whole of logic, and divide between them the entire domain of that science, it seems obvious that if the one may be used by the theologian for the upbuilding of his science, the other may be used as well. I might also urge similar arguments with those adduced under the previous case, such as that we have the example of the sacred writers themselves to sanction and encourage this instrument of reasoning, and that it is impossible from the constitution of our minds to avoid using it on such a subject as theology. But, leaving these considerations, I shall advert to an objection urged by those not friendly to a logical theology. This strictly logical process, say they, can be carried out only by the invention of premises, for it is rarely that more than one of the premises necessary for a syllogism is supplied by Scripture, and in consequence of this there is a great temptation to a theologian to go greatly beyond his depth, to erect dogmas upon very insecure bases, and to demand for what may be no better than an error of his own mind a reverence equal to what is due to Scripture. Now, in so far as this is urged by way of caution, and as a warning against building strong conclusions upon uncertain premises, we accept it ; but beyond this we cannot attach any force to the objection. When both the premises are stated in Scripture (I, of course, assume the passages to be taken in their just meaning as determined by the rules of a sound hermeneutic), it will hardly be proposed by any that we should be restricted from drawing the conclusion to which these premises necessarily lead, for this would be to forbid what is impossible to any man who really conceives and apprehends the premises to avoid doing. As little, I apprehend, will any one in this case be inclined to prohibit our regarding the conclusion as of equal authority with an express statement of Scripture ; because this would be to affirm that a conclusion might be necessarily deducible from premises and yet be of inferior certainty to them, which is impossible.



No less legitimate seems the procedure of the logical theologian when one of the premises is a statement of Scripture and the other is some principle of common sense or some necessary truth. In this case both his premises are certain, for no man can consistently hold Scripture to be certain who denies the fundamental principles of all reason, and consequently cuts away the only ground on which the claims of Scripture ultimately rest; and both his premises being here certain, the theologian may proceed with his deduction as securely in this as in the former instances. Less confidently can the legitimacy of his procedure be affirmed when one or both of his premises is only *probable*; and yet when it is remembered how much of what men confidently believe and act on rests on only probable evidence, and when it is considered that for the authority of Scripture itself we have no more than probable evidence,—strong, indeed, and very convincing, yet not demonstrative, or such as to render belief in Scripture a necessary consequence,—it may be allowed to the theologian to erect his conclusions on premises for which he can adduce only probable proof. Here, however, it behoves him to be cautious and modest; and especially to avoid attempting to sustain his position by strong assertion, vehement declamation, or bigoted censures directed against those who differ from him in his conclusions. If truth that is probable be asserted as if it were certain, harm is done and blame is incurred; but if probable truth be asserted modestly and simply as probable truth, it would seem very censorious to forbid its being sought for or presented.

Such are the limits within which I should be disposed to restrict the application of logic to the formation of a theological system, and for the legitimacy of this within these limits I would contend. It is only when men have trespassed these limits that they have done mischief, or committed folly in theological speculation.

But some will probably say, Why systematize Scripture truth at all? Why not leave it, as God has placed it in the Bible, in all its free and unfettered development? Now, that God has been pleased to present His truth to us in the Bible in an unsystematic form is most true, and we cannot doubt that in this He has been guided by a wise regard to the

welfare of man. We can even see many wise and good ends answered by this constitution of Scripture. How much of the unabated interest of readers of the Bible is due to this very thing! For this several features will account. One of the most prominent of these is the unsystematic arrangement of its materials. In this respect it is with the study of God's word as it is with the study of His works. Every one knows and feels how much more adapted to the uses of life, how much more beautiful and attractive, how much more provocative of persistent study the world is in its present form and arrangement than if any systematic order had been observed in laying out its different phenomena. What a miserable thing it would be were the world arranged with the order and stiffness of a vast museum or scientific garden! How immensely less pleasing to the eye, and less suited to the wants of man! And how speedily would the study of it become insipid and wearisome, and science itself reach its boundaries, be deprived of its stimulus, and be no longer attractive! It is strictly the same by analogy with the written word of God. But for the manner in which its materials are arranged it would be less useful and less attractive by an inconceivable amount than it is. The freeness and abundance with which its treasures are scattered about furnish at once occasion for research and a stimulus to investigation. But this striking analogy between the works and word of God fairly leads us to this,—that as the free and diversified arrangement of the objects of nature does not forbid but rather excites to the systematic classification and scientific apprehension of its phenomena, so the analogous characteristic of Scripture ought not to be held as forbidding the attempt to classify and scientifically systematize the phenomena therein presented to us, but should rather encourage and stimulate to this. It would have been a serious loss to mankind had the great Author of the Bible sent His truth to us in the form of a confession of faith, a catechism, or a system of theology. But whilst He has consulted for our benefit by sending Scripture to us in the form in which it exists, it surely argues no presumption on our part if we attempt to discover the inner connection of its different parts, to evolve the harmony which pervades the different

materials, and to elicit the principles which lie at their basis and make them capable of being arranged into one systematical and comprehensive whole.

7. Having discoursed on the object and method of theological study, I now wish to direct your attention to the *instrument* which we use in our researches in this department. This must necessarily be the natural reason of the inquirer, using reason in its wide sense as comprehensive of all the cognoscent faculties of the mind. God has bestowed these faculties upon us for the purpose of enabling us to acquire knowledge and to apprehend truth; and there is no other medium by which in our present state truth and knowledge can reach us but this. In regard to natural truth we know nothing until our intelligent faculties have been brought into contact with natural phenomena, and by our exercise of these faculties we have apprehended the qualities and relations of these phenomena. It is the same in regard to spiritual truth; it becomes truth *to us*, it exists as knowledge for *us*, only as we by an exercise of our faculties upon it apprehend it in its qualities and relations. And whether we seek to trace that truth historically or to construe it scientifically, it is through the alembic of our own minds that the whole must pass ere it can assume the form which we are desirous it should take.

This may seem too obvious to require to be insisted upon; and yet there appears to be a vast amount of confusion in the minds of many on this very subject. There are persons who speak as if they would deny to reason any place whatever in the investigation of theological truth, whilst there are others who seem to think that it is partly by reason and partly by some other instrument, which they call spiritual emotion or religious intuition, that we arrive at a knowledge of divine things. By persons of the former class a sharp distinction is drawn between reason and revelation, and they contend not only that it is from the latter alone that man can draw his knowledge, but that the instrument by which that is drawn is faith, and not reason or human intelligence. Those who belong to the latter class usually discard revelation altogether in the proper sense of the term, and make man's moral and spiritual consciousness at once the source and the instrument

of all religious knowledge—though some appear to have a misty idea of some internal manifestation of the Deity to the soul of man, in virtue of which man has an intuition of the spiritual and the divine.

Now, all this appears to me to be traceable either to a confounding of things that differ, or to incorrect views of the constitution and working of the human mind in reference to the pursuit of knowledge. A very few observations will suffice, I believe, to dispel the confusion, and place the true view of this subject clearly before the mind.

(1.) It is absurd to place reason and revelation opposite each other as separate sources of religious knowledge. This is an error of the same sort as would emerge were one to place the firmament and man's reason over against each other as separate sources of astronomical knowledge. The fallacy here is that of confounding the materials with the instrument—the source with that which draws from it what it supplies. Revelation and reason are no more distinct sources of religious knowledge than the spring and the pump are distinct sources of the water which we draw by artificial means from the bowels of the earth. Both are necessary to the result—the one as furnishing the materials, the other as the instrument by which these materials are brought forth to use. *All* the materials of divine knowledge must come by revelation; nay, we may extend the position, and say that the original materials of *all* knowledge must be furnished by revelation, *i.e.* must be supplied to our hand directly by God. Man cannot create, he can only discover truth. God must furnish the materials of our knowledge, whether sacred or secular, out of His own infinite mind; man can but observe, compare, separate, combine, and arrange these materials, and draw from his conceptions of them such inferences as they may suggest. The former of these is properly an act of revelation, the latter is an act of reasoning; the one is divine, the other is human. In giving us this revelation God may employ various methods. He may scatter the materials of knowledge among the phenomena of creation; or He may evolve them in the relations and actions of human beings; or He may authoritatively assert them in words spoken or written. But in every case the revelation is His,

and it remains utterly silent and uninformative to man until he employs his intelligent powers upon it for the purpose of educeing from it the truths it is fitted to unfold. All knowledge is something construed by reason from revelation ; and it is a gross confusion of terms and thought to speak of reason and revelation as distinct sources of knowledge.

(2.) It seems equally out of place to contrast faith with reason as instruments of investigation or media of knowledge ; as if it were by faith alone that we acquire divine knowledge, and by reason alone that we secure natural knowledge. A careful analysis of the facts of human consciousness conducts to the conclusion that faith or belief is a part of reason, and that all knowledge rests upon belief as its ultimate basis. "Credo ut sciam" was the maxim of Augustine, and it is one that holds true universally. Until we believe something, there is no point from which our investigation of truth can start—no basis on which we can rest the lever by which we are to move the world of knowledge so as to draw it to ourselves. Hence, as all science, formally developed, sets out from the enunciation of certain axioms or fundamental truths which are accepted without proof, all knowledge rests ultimately upon certain truths which are implicitly admitted or explicitly avowed by the mind. These, whether called primary truths, first principles, principles of common sense, or original beliefs, and whether described as given to the mind by a sort of connate revelation, or as obtained by a natural intuition, or as produced by a mental incapacity not to think them, are admitted by all philosophers of any note to exist, and to lie at the basis of all our science and all our reasoning. Now, these fundamental truths are accepted by us by means of faith. We believe them without being able to prove them. Faith is just as much the faculty by which we arrive at a knowledge of them as sight is the faculty by which we arrive at the knowledge of visibility, or judgment the faculty by which we arrive at a knowledge of the relations of ideas. It is absurd, then, to speak of faith as if it had nothing to do with secular or natural knowledge ; it is in reality that without which secular knowledge is to beings constituted as we are an impossibility. Equally untenable, on the other hand, is the notion that religious knowledge is attainable

only by faith or belief. The Bible is addressed to all man's faculties—to his judgment, reason, imagination, as well as to his faith. What it unfolds to us is an ultimate fact we must accept as such, and here is the proper sphere for belief; we know such facts only by God's word, and we must be content to take God's word for them, just as we take God's speaking to us in the constitution of our own minds or in the phenomena of nature for the ultimate facts and fundamental beliefs on which all natural knowledge is founded. The only difference between the facts of Scripture and those of nature in this respect is that in the former case God *tells* us the fact, and in the latter He *shows* us the fact. But in either case it is simply by an act of belief that we come to know it. When, then, God announces to us in the Bible a fact concerning Himself or concerning His relations to us, our business is to accept it as such; and here, I take it, the part of simple belief or faith terminates. What is built upon the fact we *know* only by the exercise of our intellectual powers, by which we construe the truths unfolded to our minds. Combining reason and faith in one category as forming the complement of man's intellectual powers, we pronounce *that* the proper instrument by which he is to construct out of the Bible a theology or scientific compend of the truths it contains.

8. There is one caution needful in connection with the use of the mind as the instrument of theological investigation, as of all scientific investigation of whatever kind. While the materials of our science are divine, the positions or logical forms of our science are purely human. They are *dogmata*, the forms under which the facts of revelation appear (*δοκῶσι*). They are no more God's word than the positions of natural science are God's works. In both cases the multifarious phenomena that are scattered over the field by the divine hand are God's, whilst the scientific enunciation concerning them is merely our way of representing the meaning and connection of these phenomena. We must therefore beware of placing the dogmas of theological science on the same footing with the statements of Holy Scripture. The latter are divine; the former are merely human. The one must be true; the other may be false.

9. From these statements it will be perceived that the only source from which I propose to draw the materials of our science is the written word of God. Receiving the Bible as the word of God, I regard it as the infallible, and the only infallible, record of religious truth; and as I believe it contains all the religious truth of which we can know anything in our present state, I propose to confine myself to a search after what it teaches, and to an attempt to reduce that to such a systematic arrangement as I have above described. In assuming this ground, I would not be thought to overlook or contemn the distinction which has been made between nature and Scripture as distinct sources of religious knowledge, and, by consequence, the distinction between Natural and Revealed Theology as sciences relating respectively to these sources. I do not for a moment deny that nature is a source of religious knowledge, and that great and valuable truths concerning God and our relations to Him may be gathered from the constitution and order of the universe of which we form a part, so far as these are patent to observation. I object, indeed, to the phrascology in which this is often expressed, because the phrase "Natural and Revealed Theology" proceeds upon the assumption that there may be a theology the objects of which are not revealed. But as the object of all theology is religious truth, and as religious truth can come to man only by a revelation, it is manifestly incorrect to speak as if some religious truth could come to us without a revelation. The religion of nature is a revealed religion as much as the religion of the Bible, though the form and extent of the revelation may be different in the one from the other.

But whilst I admit that much religious truth may be learned from the facts of the universe, I do not see the necessity of treating the theology of nature apart from that of the Bible, or adverting to it in any way in the teaching of theology, except as elucidatory or confirmatory of what the Bible says. For, even assuming, what has by no means been proved, that the proper limits and contents of what is called Natural Theology can be settled, the theology of the Bible, when fully unfolded, will be found to comprehend all the teachings of nature on the subject of religion. This arises from the circumstance that the Bible, as the later revelation,



assumes, where it does not formally enunciate, all the principles of the earlier; just as in the Bible itself the New Testament assumes or reiterates all the religious principles unfolded in the Old. "Christianity," as Bishop Butler says, "is a republication of natural religion . . . of that religion in its simplicity, free from the superstitions with which it was totally corrupted, and under which it was in a manner lost," though, as Butler also says, it also contains "an account of a dispensation of things not discoverable by reason."<sup>1</sup> We may expect, therefore, to find in the Bible all the truths which the religion of nature could unfold, and these in their simplicity clearly and authoritatively enunciated. Nor in this shall we be disappointed. Some truths, indeed, of a fundamental kind—such as the existence of God, the spirituality of the mind of man, the distinctions in morals, etc.—are rather assumed as already known than formally asserted or proved; still they are there, and to be recognised as essential parts of that system of truth which the Bible contains. In confining ourselves to this, therefore, we shut ourselves out from no part of the domain of theological truth, whilst we avoid much doubtful disputation and save ourselves much profitless investigation.

In defining and explaining our subject, I have further to observe that I shall aim at the construction of a Biblical rather than a Dogmatical or Ecclesiastical Theology. With many writers theology is the science of Church doctrines,—the classification and exposition of the opinions held to be orthodox by the general consent of all Christians, or as enunciated in the symbols of some particular section of the Christian Church. Thus, Clarisse, an excellent writer on theological encyclopædia, defines Dogmatic Theology as "An exposition of the commonplaces of Theoretical Theology ordered according to the law and strictness of the school, which with many is wont to be called theology *κατ' ἐξοχήν*."<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Schleiermacher defines Dogmatical Theology as the "science of the doctrines which have obtained in any Christian society at any precise period;"<sup>3</sup> and in another of his writings he says that "the presentation of the doctrinal concepts of a Church or Church party during a given period is

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, part ii. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Encyclop. Theol. Epit.*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> *Christl. Glaube*, Th. i. s. 1.

the office of Dogmatic.”<sup>1</sup> So also Twesten thus determines the subject of his lectures on theology: “If by Biblical Dogmatic be understood the exhibition of the doctrines and modes of teaching of the Biblical writers in their entire peculiarity, we must come to the assertion that the Biblical Dogmatic is not ours. What then? We answer, It is the dogmatic of the Church to which we belong, consequently Evangelical Lutheranism, inasmuch as we are members of the Lutheran Church.”<sup>2</sup> Now the position I wish to occupy is the opposite of this. Church Theology, which this writer embraces as his special subject, I intend to pretermit, except as I may be led to notice it for historical or polemical purposes; and the special theology which he refuses I embrace as the proper object of my profession.

In thus declining to occupy myself with Church Theology as a primary object of investigation, I conceive that I am acting in the spirit of the principles by which, as Congregational Independents, we are distinguished. For us there is no “Church” in the political and ecclesiastical sense of the term, and though there are certain views of divine truth which are commonly understood amongst us as accordant with Scripture, we have adopted no symbol or authoritative exposition of the doctrines which we profess. I should be at a loss, therefore, were I to set about teaching Church Theology, to know which Church to follow as the authoritative exponent of religious truth; nor should I have any standard to appeal to which my hearers would agree to accept as decisive. Under these circumstances I am in a manner shut up to a purely Biblical Theology as the only department where I can find proper scope as a teacher. I would not, however, be regarded as in this case succumbing to an unwelcome necessity. I should not wish it to be otherwise. Whilst I am far from under-rating the scholastic theology as a result of human thought and genius, and whilst I think it wise and becoming to render the most respectful attention to what grave and learned and godly men have deliberately adopted as a just expression of the truths of Christianity, I nevertheless conceive that in the teaching of theology there is something higher and better to be aimed at than merely to expound and criticise the judg-

<sup>1</sup> *Kurze Darstellung*, § 32, s. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Vorlesungen*, i. s. 37.

ments of other men, however good or able. Let us take help from such by all means, so far as they appear to us qualified to render it; but when the ancient fountains of divine truth are open to us in the word of God, who would be content to occupy himself with the secondary and inferior supplies which are to be found in the writings of men, whether individuals or collective bodies? "The interpretation of the Scriptures," says Bacon, "which are the fountains of the water of life, are of two sorts: methodical and solute [or at large]. For this divine water, which excelleth so much that of Jacob's well, is drawn forth much in the same kind as natural water useth to be out of wells or fountains; either it is first forced up into a cistern, and from thence fetched and derived for use, or else it is drawn and received in buckets or vessels immediately where it springeth: the former sort whereof, though it seemeth to be the more ready, yet in my judgment is more subject to corrupt. This is that method which hath exhibited to us the scholastic divinity, whereby divinity hath been reduced into an art, as in cisterns, and the streams of doctrine or positions fetched and derived thence."<sup>1</sup> As at once the easier and worthier course, then, I propose to go at once to the fountainhead, and draw from those "wells of salvation" which God has opened for us in His word.

[The main divisions of the science of Biblical Theology given in this work are, First, THEOLOGY, or the doctrine of Scripture concerning God; Second, ANTHROPOLOGY, or the doctrine concerning Man; Third, CHRISTOLOGY, or the doctrine concerning Christ; and Fourth, SOTERIOLOGY, or the doctrine of Salvation. These are the divisions now generally adopted by teachers of theology; but the order in which they are given is determined by the point of view from which the subjects are regarded. At one period Dr. Alexander included the subject of Christology under Soteriology, and thus restricted the course of teaching to the three main divisions of Theology, Anthropology, and Soteriology;<sup>2</sup> but he appears to have found this plan less convenient than the one adopted in this work,

<sup>1</sup> *Advancement of Learning*, Book ix.

<sup>2</sup> See Lecture on Theology, *W. Lindsay Alexander, D.D., LL.D.: His Life and Work*, p. 344. Nisbet & Co., 1887.

and to have reverted to the fourfold division given in his article on "Theology" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (8th ed.). The principle upon which this division proceeds may be thus indicated:—The "two poles of theological science" are God and man—theology in its more restricted sense, and anthropology. A study of the statements of Scripture concerning God and man discloses the fact that their relations have been disturbed by the sin of man, whereupon the question arises, What does Scripture teach concerning the reconciliation of man and his Maker? In attempting to answer this, the medium of reconciliation is found in the person and work of Christ, and a study of the doctrine concerning Christ—Christology—thus follows in natural order. Lastly, the reconciliation effected by Christ is viewed as realized in the salvation of man, the nature, grounds, agency, ultimate cause, and manifested results of which fall to be considered under the head of Soteriology.—ED.]

# PART I.

## T H E O L O G Y.



### CHAPTER I.

#### RELATIONS OF NATURAL TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

FROM the domain of what is called Natural Theology, including nature, experience, and reason, we cannot obtain all the information that is requisite for our enjoying such a view of God as is needful before we can truly worship Him, and reasonably rest upon Him as the object of our religious emotions and tendencies. We come from the inquiry within this field with a solid conviction that He is, and that He is a Being of wisdom, power, and apparent beneficence; but beyond this our impressions are far from being clear or firm. There is a presumption that He is all-perfect, infinite, and eternal; but on these points we feel that we stand in need of more copious, authentic, and convincing information. As a unity of plan pervades the universe, we may presume that the Creator of it is probably one, though we feel that this by no means necessarily follows from the facts observed. We are at a loss also to gather from the phenomena of nature and experience whether the Being to whom they point us possesses a material or composite nature like ours, or whether He exists as pure incorporeal spirit. In short, on a multitude of important points we feel that we are without satisfactory information, and are led earnestly to desiderate some authoritative teacher who may clear away the mist that obstructs our vision, and may guide us to conclusions at once precise and well established.

And to bring us to this point, and excite in us this desire, is one of the great uses of natural theology. If the results of that study are but scanty, if the truths to which it conducts are but dimly discerned, the natural and proper effect of this on every serious and thoughtful mind is to provoke to further investigation, and to the desire for some higher and better teaching than nature can supply. If from this source nothing more were to be learned than simply that it is *possible* that God is, no earnest mind could refrain from feeling that even in this would lie a sufficient reason for the use of all possible means by which the search after God might be successful. There is thus laid upon us from the lessons of natural theology a stringent obligation to inquire whether any fuller revelation of God has been given to men than the page of nature unfolds. And thus we are handed over, as it were, by the teachings of nature to that other source of divine knowledge which has been provided for us by God—the Holy Scriptures. To these we now proceed for the purpose of gathering from them those lessons concerning God which they supply.

In looking at the scriptural teaching concerning God, in the general, we find that whilst the sacred writers assume the existence of that previous knowledge of God which nature supplies, they, at the same time, confirm as well as supplement the conclusions to which the phenomena of nature conduct us. Before proceeding to the more special examination of the doctrine of Scripture concerning God, it may be well to notice a few points in which it furnishes this confirmatory and corroborative support to natural theology.

1. Scripture amply confirms the conclusion that we can never arrive at a full and direct knowledge of God, and that it is only partially and by analogy that we can apprehend Him. The Bible offers to us no definition of God; it attempts no explanation of the mystery of His Being; it supplies to us no aid by which we can arrive at a comprehension of His nature. On the contrary, it discourages all such ambitious endeavours. "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" "Behold, God is great, and we know Him not;" "touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out." "His greatness is unsearchable." When we talk of Him, "we cannot order our speech by

reason of darkness." "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself." "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (Job xi. 7, xxxvii. 23; Isa. xlv. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 16). Such is the language in which Scripture speaks to us of God, and sets before us the unsearchableness and incomprehensibility of His being and perfections. It teaches us that for us it is impossible to penetrate or lift up the veil that hides the Eternal from our view, that it is only as He is pleased to suffer some rays of His invisible glory to come forth upon us that we know anything truly concerning Him, and that what alone it beseems us to do is to accept the facts of His being and perfections as revealed to us, with adoring worship to wait at His footstool, and with full and ready obedience to do His will.

In accordance with this, Scripture represents God under those analogical forms which are borrowed from the conditions, relations, and ways of men. Out of this comes that anthropological representation of God which is characteristic of the Bible. Whilst its writers are careful to assure us that God is not a man as we are, that He is spirit and not flesh, and that no representation can bring Him adequately before the mind of man; they at the same time freely ascribe to God qualities, affections, and relations which are in themselves, and taken literally, purely human. He sees with eyes, hears with ears, acts with hands, walks with feet; He is grieved, is angry, repents, loves, hates; He is a Father, a Husband, a King, a Friend; and other similar qualities and acts and relations are ascribed to Him. By some these anthropomorphisms of the Bible have been objected to; they have denounced them as too gross and rude, and fit only for semi-barbarous conceptions of the Deity; and on this ground they have even proposed to set aside the Bible as unworthy of the place it claims to hold in the religious teaching of mankind. But such objectors forget that the very same difficulty on which they insist attaches to the lessons of natural reason; and they always forget to tell us how, with minds such as we now possess, we are to think of God at all otherwise than anthropomorphically. Were it needful, it would not be difficult to show that their own attempts to speak

of God are just as much vitiated by this imperfection as are those they so loudly denounce. They speak of Him as a Father, as loving us and watching over us, as spreading a table for us, and casting a shield around us, and such like. What, I ask, are these but anthropomorphisms ; and does it not indicate mere caprice and prejudice for men to reject or depreciate the Bible for its anthropomorphisms, when in the very act of doing so they manifest their inability to speak of God without resorting to similar forms of representation ? With what consistency, for instance, can men speak of God as a Father, whilst they object to the Bible for speaking of Him as a Judge ? or how can they deem it becoming to represent Him as feeding and caring for and watching over His intelligent creatures as His children, while they think it too gross to represent Him as commanding, reproofing, judging, and sentencing them as His subjects ? It is, no doubt, possible to say something about God without resorting to anthropomorphisms ; possible to speak of Him only in the most abstract phraseology as The Deity, The Infinite, The Absolute, and such like. But if in this way anthropomorphisms are avoided, they are avoided by the evacuation of all thinkable reality from the concept of God. A Being so purely abstract is for our concrete existences tantamount to nothing. And so, in their professed desire to elevate God above the mists of common conception, they raise Him on so high a pedestal that He utterly passes beyond our vision, and is lost to our view amidst clouds and darkness.

2. A second remark of a general kind I would make on the relation of nature and Scripture to each other in respect of their teachings concerning God is, that whilst the Bible adopts and carries out the analogical and anthropomorphic representation of God which nature also constrains us to adopt, the former supplies to us a just basis for this in the information it gives us concerning the original constitution of man. Man, we are told in the Bible, was made at first in the image and likeness of God. What this statement exactly imports may furnish subject of inquiry to us farther on in our course ; at present it is enough to call attention to the fact that the Bible declares man to have in his original constitution a resemblance to God. In God, therefore, lies the



archeal type, so to speak, of man, and man as he exists is in his nature a manifestation or representation in some degree of God. It is not therefore a mere arbitrary accommodation to our limited faculties when God represents Himself to us by analogies borrowed from man. These analogies really exist; they lie deep in man's nature; and they furnish not only the readiest but the truest representations of God that can be supplied.

3. The Bible reiterates and confirms the conclusions of natural theology as to the distinction of God from the world, representing Him as the Creator and Upholder of all things; the Eternal, Uncaused, Vivifying Power by which all that exists has been brought into being, is vivified and made to subsist, and by which the whole frame of being is held together. It teaches us to discriminate Him as a Spirit from the material universe, as true and real from what is merely phenomenal, as self-existent from what is dependent, as unchangeable from what is in a constant state of flux and transition. It thus clears away much mist and uncertainty that hangs around the speculations of mere unassisted reason, and utters with a clear voice divine oracles regarding the being and perfections of God.

4. The Bible announces with distinctness and emphasis the unity of God. It thus accounts for that unity of design and working which appears in the universe, and presents it as the result of purpose in the one creating and ruling mind, not merely as the result of harmony of plan and concurrence of action among a plurality of agents. The study of the universe may suggest to us the probability of one sole and Supreme Creator and Ruler, but it is only from Scripture that certainty can be reached on this point.

5. But besides thus reiterating, completing, and illustrating the teachings of natural religion, the Bible has many peculiar and special revelations to make known to us concerning God, immensely important for us to know, but of which the page of nature has no trace. Of these some are of the same class as those already made known to us by nature, but there either very imperfectly hinted at or not indicated at all—such as certain of the attributes of God and characteristics of His manifestations; whilst others are of an entirely peculiar and special kind, differing, not in degree and number only,

but in kind and nature from those which the universe unfolds to us. These peculiar revelations stand connected especially with the scheme of redemption which the Bible unfolds. "It is here," as Dr. Chalmers has remarked, "where the main helplessness of nature lies. It is baffled in all its attempts to decipher the state and the prospects of man, viewed in the relation of an offending subject to an offended sovereign. In a word, its chief obscurity, and which it is wholly unable to disperse, is that which rests on the hopes and the destiny of our species. There is in it enough of manifestation to awaken the fears of guilt, but not enough again to appease them. It emits, and audibly emits, a note of terror; but in vain do we listen for one authentic word of comfort from any of its oracles. It is able to see the danger, but not the deliverance. It can excite the forebodings of the human spirit, but cannot quell them—knowing just enough to stir the perplexity, but not enough to set the perplexity at rest. It can state the difficulty, but cannot unriddle the difficulty—having just as much knowledge as to enunciate the problem, but not so much as might lead to the solution of the problem. There must be a measure of light, we do allow; but, like the lurid gleams of a volcano, it is not a light which guides, but which bewilders and terrifies. It prompts the question, but cannot frame or furnish the reply. Natural theology may see as much as shall draw forth the anxious interrogation, 'What shall I do to be saved?' The answer to this comes from a higher theology."<sup>1</sup>

The information which the Bible gives us concerning God and His ways towards us is spread over its entire surface, and lies embedded in all its strata. In the Old Testament, however, the revelations presented wear an aspect of incompleteness as compared with those of the New. The teachings of the former are more elementary than those of the latter; truths are shadowed forth rather than fully displayed; hints are given, glimpses of spiritual mysteries are afforded, that rather stimulate to inquiry than satisfy the mind that searches after God; and as the lessons of nature hand us over to the Bible for further instruction concerning God, so the teachings of the Old Testament at once prepare us for and send us to

<sup>1</sup> *Natural Theology*, Select Works, vol. v. p. 495.

the teachings of the New for the completion of our theology. It is the same grand apocalypse of God which is presented to us ; but it is in divers manners, and by a progressive unfolding, that it is conveyed. In the later revelation not only is all that the earlier teaches concerning God reiterated, but He here comes very nigh to us ; He here speaks to us by His Son, who is Himself God manifest in the flesh, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person ; we are brought thereby into close individual relation to God, so that we may be said to see Him ; and the longing aspiration of the heart, which expressed itself in the language of Philip when he said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," finds its satisfaction in Christ's reply, "He that hath seen ME hath seen the Father."

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## CHAPTER II.

### I. THE NAMES OF GOD.

In proceeding to consider the Bible revelations concerning God, the first thing that demands our attention is the *Names* by which God there designates Himself. As the Bible professes to make known to us, not God as He is in Himself, but His *Name* or outward manifestation of Himself to His intelligent creatures, so it attaches special importance to the words by which this manifestation is indicated to us. All the names by which the Bible designates God are significant ; and thus each of them stands as the symbol of some truth concerning Him which He would have us to receive. All this renders it of importance to us that we should rightly apprehend the import of the Divine Names in Scripture.

Of these names there is one which may be regarded as the *proper* and *peculiar* name of God, the name which He has appropriated to Himself, and which He will share with none other ; of the rest some are *appellative*, and others are *attributive* or *descriptive*.

i. THE PROPER AND PECULIAR NAME OF GOD is contained

in the four letters יהוה. As usually pointed, this word appears as יהוה; but, as is well known, the points here appended are those appropriate to אֲדֹנָי (the sheva being substituted for the chateph-pathach in the first syllable, probably as an abbreviation in writing); which by a perpetual K'ri the Massoretes direct to be read in order to avoid the utterance of the peculiar name of God, which the Jews held to be irreverent. For the same reason when יהוה and אֲדֹנָי occur together, as *e.g.* in Isa. xxii. 12, 14, to avoid repeating Adonai, the points appropriate to Elohim are placed under יהוה, and it is so read. At what time this superstitious reverence for the name of God crept in among the Jews we cannot discover. It must have existed anterior to the composition of the apocryphal writings, and to the translation of the LXX., as in these the word *Kύριος* is always used as the proper name of God. From the occurrence of the word, however, on the Moabite Stone it would appear that in the time of King Mesha the Jews did not hesitate to use the word, so that it became known to the neighbouring nations as the name of the God whom they worshipped. The entire disuse of the word, which has prevailed for so many ages, has caused the proper pronunciation of it to be entirely lost from traditionary recollection, so that it is only from etymology that it can be with probability recovered.

From Ex. iii. 14 and vi. 2, it is certain that the ancient Hebrews regarded the word as forming part of the substantive verb יהיה, of which the earlier form was הִיָּה. Of this earlier form the 3rd person singular of the imperfect would be יִהְיֶה, answering to the יִהְיֶה of the later form; and this Gesenius, Ewald, and many others consider to be the proper pronunciation of the tetragrammaton. Fürst, on the other hand, thinks the regular form would be יִהְיֶה or יִהְיֶה. Perhaps the fact that the Samaritans pronounced the word *Iaβé*, as Theodoret (*Quæst. in Exod. xv.*) informs us, may be allowed some weight in favour of the reading Jahveh. It matters little, however, whether we read the word Jahveh or Jihveh or Jeheveh, so long as it is admitted that it is the 3rd pers. sing. of the imperfect of the substantive verb. Indeed, as "Jehovah," though really no word at all, but only a misreading of the original word by one who did not know

that the points under it are those belonging to Adonai, has nevertheless established itself in common usage, and is undoubtedly more euphonious than any of the others, it would be foolish now to try to introduce any of them in its stead. The importance of retaining the right etymology of the word arises from this, that we are thereby enabled to ascertain the meaning and import of the name which God announced as His proper appellation. In Hebrew it is not uncommon to find a nominal form derived from the 3rd pers. sing. of the imperfect used as an appellative; and such forms appear to indicate that the quality expressed by the verb exists supremely in, or is the characteristic of, the object to which the name is applied. Thus we have יִצְחָק, "He that laughs," "the laugher," from צָחַק, "to laugh;" יַעֲקֹב, "the supplanter," from עָקַב, "to supplant;" יִמְרֵה, "the refractory," from מָרָה, "to be perverse or refractory," and many others. Following the analogy of such formations, the name יְהוָה, whether pronounced Jahveh or Jihveh, or Jeheveh, implies the concentration, so to speak, in God of the quality of being or existence; to *be* is His peculiar characteristic; He *is* in a sense in which no other being is; He is self-existent, and cannot but be; He is the unchangeable, infinite, eternal essence. With this explanation of the word all those passages of Scripture, in which stress is laid on it as the name of the Almighty, accord. It is because this is His name that He changes not (Mal. iii. 6); that He is the King of the whole earth, reigning for ever (Ps. x. 16, xcix. 1, cxlvi. 10); that He is the Author of creation and the Universal Ruler (Amos v. 8, ix. 6; Ps. lxviii. 4; Jer. xxxii. 27); that His people may confidently call on Him as ever present, and as having all things in His hand (Jer. xxxiii. 2, l. 33, 34); and that in this lies a security for His forgiving grace enduring from generation to generation. In the opinion that in this lies the significance of the name, the ancient Jews and most scholars of eminence in recent times have concurred, among whom are Buxtorf, Hottinger, Hitzig, Maurer, Gesenius, Knobel, Delitzsch, Hävernicks, and Hengstenberg. More weighty authority in a question of this sort could not be adduced. It may be added that the LXX. render יהוה אלהים by ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, and the Greco-Venet. renders יהוה by ὁ δυνάτης.

If the tetragrammaton conveys the idea of absolute being, then, as this is not separable either in reality or in thought from eternal self-existence, the name must include this concept also. Accordingly, in some of the modern versions "The Eternal" (*L'Eternel*, *Der Ewige*) is given as the rendering of the tetragrammaton; and this Gesenius, Hengstenberg, Rosenmüller, Tuch, and many others approve. It is favoured by the *ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος* of *Rev. i. 4, 8*, which is only a periphrasis of eternal.

To some it has appeared that the idea thus conveyed of God is too abstract to be suited to the genius of the ancient Hebrews. To meet this Gesenius has suggested that the word may be pointed יְהוֹה, and taken as the 3rd singular of the imperfect in Hiphil of the verb הוה; in which case it would mean, "He who causes to be," that is, "The Creator." But though the ancient Hebrews were more given to look at and speak of things in the concrete than to indulge in abstract speculation, there is no reason to suppose them incapable of receiving and realizing the concept of simple existence, of pure being. This is a concept which a child or a rustic may be made to receive, and the ancient Hebrews were for the most part far above the level of children or rustics in capacity for spiritual ideas. As for the suggestion of Gesenius, it is undoubtedly ingenious; but it is exposed to two objections which are fatal to it—the one, that the verb nowhere occurs in the Hiphil, so that the word he suggests is purely conjectural; and the other, that in none of the passages in which the name is used does the idea of creativeness come into prominence. Besides, seeing God elsewhere calls Himself Creator, using the proper Hebrew word for this, ברא, why should it be supposed that He would construct a new and peculiar word to express this idea? and seeing creation was only one among many works proceeding from Him, why should this be selected as embodying the one concept specially and peculiarly designative of Him?

By some stress is laid on the fact that it is the imperfect or future tense from which the name is formed; and they would explain it accordingly. Thus Baumgarten says, "We must proceed to יהוה from the words אהיה אשר אהיה; and thus Jehovah is, as He Himself declares, the historical God, the

God of Abraham. The reference becomes clear when, with Aquila and Theodotion, we give the mood its usual, *i.e.* future, tense meaning. Since the repetition of *אֶהְיֶה* cannot be tautological, we translate 'I shall be who I will and should be' ('Ich werde sein der ich sein will und soll'). We have thus here the reference to the promise to the fathers, which ever points to a future manifestation of Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch adopts substantially the same view: "Creation," says he, "is the beginning, and the bringing of everything created perfectly to its idea is the end. The kingdom of power must become the kingdom of glory. Between lies the kingdom of grace, a long history, whose essential content is redemption. *יְהוָה* is the God who mediates the beginning and the end in the lapse of this history—in one word, God the Redeemer."<sup>2</sup> That the idea here suggested is substantially true cannot be questioned; God the everlasting is from that very fact God who is ever revealing Himself to His creatures, and in the sphere of this fallen world ever revealing Himself as the Restorer and Redeemer; but that His reason for taking to Himself the name Jehovah was to convey this truth, or that this is to be found in the futurity form of the word, seems altogether without ground.<sup>3</sup>

This idea has been carried still further by Mr. Tyler,<sup>4</sup> by Mr. Macwhorter,<sup>5</sup> and by Mr. Macdonald,<sup>6</sup> by whom the term Jehovah is made to bear reference to the future manifestation of God the Saviour in Jesus Christ. What has been advanced in illustration of their views by these writers, contains much that is ingenious, interesting, and instructive; but their entire theory seems to me to want a basis in fact on which to rest.

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Comment. zum Pentat.* i. p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Genesis*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> One may cite Delitzsch here against himself. Writing of nouns formed from the future (or, as he calls it, the imperfect) of verbs, he says (*Isagoge in Gram. et Lex. Ling. Heb.*), "In nrm. formandis ad habitum quondam vel actionis vel status qui personæ vel rei inhaereat, significandum imperfecta verba adhiberi." This is fully supported by the usage of the language; in all such nouns it is the eminence or predominance of the quality in the object, and not progressiveness or continued development of that quality, which the form of the word is designed to convey.

<sup>4</sup> *Jehovah, the Redeemer God*, etc., Lond. 1861.

<sup>5</sup> *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan. 1857.

<sup>6</sup> *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Mr. Macwhorter renders the exclamation of Eve on the birth of her son Cain thus: "I have gotten a man, even him who is to be," or to "come;" with this Mr. Tyler substantially coincides; and on this their theory rests. Now, is such a rendering grammatically possible? Can a single instance be adduced of a verb not *already* recognised as a proper name being placed in apposition with a preceding clause by means of *הוא*? And, with respect to the whole class to which this view belongs, may we not ask whether it be not liable to the objection of conveying to us unworthy views of God, as if He, the immutable and eternal, should give as His *peculiar* name,—the symbol conveying the true concept of Him,—a word which expresses rather what He is to *become*, as manifested to men, than what He *is* in Himself?

On the whole, we accept as that best sustained the old view, that by this name God would convey to us the idea that PURE BEING is His peculiar and characteristic quality.

I may remark, in passing, that the formation of names from the imperfect of verbs in Hebrew finds an analogy in the Latin, when from the future participle active nouns are formed which express the action of the verb in an agent. Thus from *scripturus* we have *scriptor*; from *moniturus*, *monitor*; *auditurus*, *auditor*; and innumerable others. These future participles are never used as adjectives, but always as substantives, and they express the idea that the agent is still at work, that his work is not done, that he continues to do it. They thus answer closely to the imperfect in Hebrew, which expresses, not a temporal relation primarily, but simply that the action indicated by the verb is not completed; so that it may be rendered either by a present or a future, or even by a past, as the context may determine.

It yet remains to inquire at what time *יהוה* came to be known as the proper name of God. Here the question resolves itself into an inquiry into the meaning of Ex. vi. 3. Is this to be regarded as the first revelation of the name as a name, or is the import of the statement that though the patriarchs before this time may have known the *word* as a designation of God, they had not had the means of realizing the full meaning of the appellation—that not before this had the concept of God conveyed by that word been



fully made known to them? The former of these views is probably that which the first reading of the passage would suggest; but it is exposed to such serious difficulties that it seems untenable. How, on this view, are we to account for such a statement as that in Gen. iv. 1, that in vi. 6, that in xii. 8, and many similar passages? To say that in these passages the word is used by prolepsis, is to resort to a very arbitrary and violent expedient for escaping from a difficulty. In such a proper name, also, as *Moriah* (מוֹרְיָה) we have evidence of early acquaintance with the name Jehovah; and from the name of the mother of Moses, *Jochebed* (יֹכֶבֶד), we learn that among his maternal ancestry this name was known. In the family of Jacob, also, we have such names as *Ahijah* and *Abiah* (*Abijah*), to which may be added the names of the two wives of Ezra or Ezer, *Hodiah* and *Bithiah* (1 Chron. ii. 25, vii. 8, iv. 18), all indicating a familiarity with the peculiar name of God before the time of Moses. In the face of these facts, the opinion that the name Jehovah was for the first time made known to Moses on the occasion referred to, cannot be retained. Adopting the other view, the statement "by my name Jehovah was I not known to them" is best explained by a reference to Ex. xxxiii. 19; Ps. lxxvi. 1, etc.<sup>1</sup> "The name Jehovah," says Kurz, "was (or rather *became*) undoubtedly a new one then, but only in the sense in which Christ said (John xiii. 34), 'a *new* commandment give I unto you,' whereas He merely repeated one of the primary commandments which we find in the Old Testament, and meet with on every hand in the laws of Moses. It was a commandment, however, the fulness and depth, the meaning, force, and value of which were first unfolded by the gospel. And just as the greatest act of love which the world ever witnessed provided a new field for the exemplification of this command in greater glory than was possible under the law, and thus the old commandment became a new one; so did the new act of God in the redemption of Israel from Egypt furnish a new field in which the ancient name of God struck fresh and deeper roots, and thus the ancient name became a new one."

<sup>1</sup> Hengstenberg, *Beiträge die Auth. des Pentateuches*, i. p. 268 ff.; Kurz, *History of the Old Covenant*, ii. pp. 98, 215; Delitzsch, *Genesis*, p. 26.

Attempts have been made by some to find a heathen origin for the name Jehovah; but the futility of these have been so amply exposed, and the hypothesis is now so generally repudiated by scholars, that it seems needless to occupy space by detailing them.<sup>1</sup>

In composition the word יהוה is abbreviated into יהו, *Jeho*; יו, *Jo*; יהי, *Jahu*. The name יה, *Jah*, is also an abbreviation of the tetragrammaton; but it is chiefly used in poetry and in devotional ejaculations. The name appears entire also in some proper names, viz. Jehovah Jireh, etc.

Besides that which God assumes to Himself as His proper and incommunicable name, other designations of Him are used in Scriptures. We proceed now to consider the second class of the divine names, viz.,—

ii. APPELLATIVES. These are—

(i.) אֱל. This is supposed to be derived from a root אָל, no longer in use, signifying “to be strong.” It is used, however, not as a descriptive epithet, as if equivalent to “the strong one,” but as an appellative. In prose it is generally used with some qualifying attribute or adjective, as אֱל עֶדֶי, etc.; but in poetry it is frequently used simply as a designation of the Almighty, as in Num. xxiii. 8: “How shall I curse whom God (אֱל) hath not cursed?” etc. It is sometimes used with the possessive suffix of the 1st person אֱלִי. It is used of idols or false gods, as in Isa. xlv. 10, 15, and in such phrases as אֱל יִכָּר, אֱל נָר, etc. This term seems to have been in use as a designation of deity among all the Semitic nations. It appears in the *Il* of the Phœnicians, the *Al* and *Allah* of the Arabs, the *Illo* of the Syriac, and the *Al* of the Samaritans.

(ii.) אֲדֹנָי. This, derived from דָּן or דִּין, “to judge, to rule,” properly means lord, and answers to the Greek κύριος, and the Latin *dominus*. It does not appear in any of the cognate dialects, though we find a trace of it in the Chaldaic proper name Baladan (בלֵאֲדָן), and some have connected it with the Greek Ἀδωνις, which Hesychius interprets by κύριος. When used of God in the O. T. it is used in the

<sup>1</sup> See Tholuck, “Ueb. die Hypothese des Ursprungs des Namens Jehovah aus Ägypten Phœnicien oder Indian,” in his *Verm. Schriften*, i. 377–405; Gesenius, *Thes. s.v.*

plural אֱלֹהִים, probably as the plural intensive or quantitative, used to denote manifold and vast greatness, as in such words as שָׁמַיִם, "heaven;" מַיִם, "water," etc. Adonai is thus = *dominissimus*, i.e. *summus dominus*.

(iii.) אֱלֹהִים. This, the appellation most frequently used of God in the O. T., is the plural of אֱלֹהִי, which is also found, though only in poetry, and with the later writers. Some refer this to the same root as אֱל, and suppose the primary idea of the name is that of strength or power. It is more probable, however, that these words belong to different roots, and that אֱלֹהִים is derived from אֱלֵה, a root no longer extant in Hebrew,

but surviving in the Arab. <sup>أَلِهَ</sup> *'aliha*, *he was astonished, was*

*seized with fear*. It thus, as an abstract noun, denotes primarily fear, and then secondarily, an object of fear or reverential awe. As used of the Divine Being, it indicates Him as an object of fear and reverence, and thus corresponds to the פֶּחַד of Gen. xxxi. 42, 53, "The fear of Isaac," by which Jacob swore, i.e. the Being whom Isaac feared, revered, and worshipped. This being the generic idea of the word accounts for the wide usage of it in Scripture, where it is not only used of the true God as the proper object of fear and worship, but also of heathen deities, both in the singular and in the plural (comp. Dan. xi. 37, 39; Ex. xii. 12, xviii. 11, etc.). The singular is also used tropically of any object of trust or confidence, as in Hab. i. 11, "Then his spirit transgressed and passed over, to whom his strength was for a god;" and in the remarkable passage, Job xii. 6, where of the robber it is said, אֱלֹהֵי בָרָדוֹ, "who brings his god in his hand," i.e. his weapon in which he trusts; just as Mezentius in the *Æneid* (x. 772) is represented as exclaiming: "Dextra, mihi deus, et telum quod missile libro, Nunc adsint." In one passage Elohim is used of an apparition as an object of awe and dread: "I saw," said the woman to Saul, "Elohim ascending out of the earth" (1 Sam. xxviii. 13). It is used also of kings and judges; but not of kings and judges as such, but of them as representatives and vicegerents of Jehovah, the great King and Judge; so that Elohim in such usages really means God as represented by the king or judge; comp. Deut. xix. 17 and Ps. lxxxii. 1; and accordingly in Ex. xxi. 6, the LXX. render

אֱלֹהִים לְ by πρὸς τὸ κριτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ. Whether Elohim is ever used of angels may be doubted. In the LXX. several passages are so interpreted; but this is due probably to a feeling on the part of the translators, who shrank from giving the word its proper meaning in these passages. Thus Ps. viii. 6, where it is said of man that God has made him a little lower than Elohim, the LXX. render by ἡλάττωσας αὐτὸν βράχυν τι παρ' ἀγγέλους. So in Gen. iii. 5, some of the ancient versions and interpreters explain אֱלֹהִים כְּמַלְאָכִים, "and ye shall be as God," as meaning, "ye shall be as angels." It is best, however, in both passages to retain the proper meaning of the word. Satan sought to induce Eve to take of the forbidden fruit by assuring her that thereby she should "become as God, knowing good and evil;" and the Psalmist, recognising that God had made man in His own image, and had set him over all the works of His hands, speaks of man as thus inferior only to God Himself. In Ps. cxxxviii. 1, where the A. V. renders, "before the Gods will I sing praise unto thee," and where the LXX. has ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων, the אֱלֹהִים נֶגְדִי of the original probably means nothing else than "before God," i.e. before the visible emblem of His presence in the temple; as the Psalmist says elsewhere, "I will worship towards Thy holy temple" (Ps. v. 7)—the place where God was especially present to receive the worship of His people.

With the article אֱלֹהִים is God κατ' ἐξοχήν the One true God. Elohim, however, without the article has the same force, and is so used in a multitude of passages. When used of God it is usually construed with verbs and adjectives in the singular. For this peculiar construction of a plural substantive with singular adjuncts various suggestions have been offered by way of accounting. All are agreed that it is a *constructio ad sensum*; but what is the sense thereby indicated, critics are not agreed. The older theologians held that the fact of the Trinity was thereby indicated, the plural substantive being expressive of the distinction in the Godhead, the singular adjunct intimating that nevertheless God is one. This is now almost universally rejected; but I am not sure that it deserves to be so. It is undoubtedly a law of Hebrew syntax that an object in which plurality is combined into a unity is construed in the plural with verbs and adjectives in the singu-

lar. Thus we have Ps. lxxvii. 15, רַבָּה תְּהוֹמוֹת, "a great sea;" Ps. xviii. 15, בְּרָקִים רַב, "much lightning;" עֵבֶר הַמַּיִם, "the waters" ("the body of waters") "has gone over me;" Isa. xvi. 8, שְׂדֵמוֹת עֲמָלָל, "the field" ("the glebe," comprising several portions) "languishes," and many others. This being an established usage of Hebrew speech, it does not appear to me at all improbable that it was because the ancient Hebrews knew somewhat at least of the distinction in the Godhead that they construed not only Elohim, but other designations of the Deity in the plural with verbs and adjectives in the singular. If this be rejected, the most probable hypothesis is that Elohim is the plural intensive, though it is not easy to see in what respects it is intensive, the singular, Eloah, meaning quite as much as the plural Elohim; and on this hypothesis the peculiarity of construction above noticed is left wholly unaccounted for.

As Elohim is often used as equivalent to Jehovah, and the two names are often used together, and as they are not infrequently interchanged, it becomes of interest to inquire into the relation of Jehovah to Elohim. As both of these are designations of the one God, it is not surprising that we should find sometimes the one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both together used by the sacred writers. It is remarkable, however, that usually when the writer employs the one he does not in the same section or context employ the other. This has excited notice, and has led to much investigation; some contending that the use of the one term or the other is determined by the suitableness of its significancy to the subject of the context in which it occurs; others finding in the distinctive use of the terms traces and evidences of separate authorship of the sections; while others see in this nothing but one of the accidents of composition. A few general observations may not be out of place here.

1. The first two of the hypotheses just stated have been generally here put forth as directly antagonistic to each other. But it does not seem to have been sufficiently adverted to that both rest really on the same fundamental assumption—that, namely, of such a distinction in the meaning of the two terms as renders it proper that the one and not the other should be used in certain connections. This is avowedly the assumption

of those who advocate the former of the two; but it is not less by implication involved in the latter. For if the difference of usage is traceable to difference of authorship, then as each author must have had a *reason* for preferring the one name to the other, and as the only reason that could have dictated such a preference is one arising from the signification of the word, we are, as much on this hypothesis as on the other, thrown back on the inquiry whether any such distinction of signification can be established as will account for the one name being used in any given connection rather than the other. We say the only reason that could have led different writers to use the one word rather than the other is such a distinctive difference of sense as rendered the one word proper and the other not in the connection; for to what else can the preference of the one to the other be referred? It cannot be pretended that both names were not equally familiar to every Hebrew writer; and if it be said that *mere accident* determined it, a cause is assumed which will account for the diversity as well on the hypothesis of *one* writer throughout as on that of *several*, which is a virtual giving up of the latter hypothesis entirely. We conclude, then, that the assumption we have specified is essential to both hypotheses. The question, then, comes to be, Can such a distinction of meaning be established? That the two words in their primary etymological sense are distinguishable from each other lies on the surface; but this is not the question here. The question is, Are they *so* distinct that a correct writer would feel in some connections he could use only the one, and in other connections only the other? To this question no satisfactory answer has been yet given. Many suggestions have been offered as to the distinctive difference of the two words; but they can be regarded in no other light than as the *à priori* guesses of learned and ingenious men. As yet no attempt has been made to discover by careful induction what is the conclusion which the usage of Scripture authorizes on this point. 2. Sufficient care does not seem to have been taken to eliminate passages which can contribute nothing to the settlement of the question at issue—to “purge the instances,” if we may use the language of Bacon. Of the many cases in which Elohim is used, a very large number prove nothing whatever as to any *preference* on the part of the

writer for that name rather than Jehovah, simply because the grammatical conditions of the sentence precluded the use of a proper name such as Jehovah. In all cases, for instance, where a pronoun or adjective has to be used along with the appellation of God, the writer lies under a necessity of using Elohim and not Jehovah. On the other hand, there are cases where Jehovah could alone be used; as, for instance, when Jacob says (Gen. xxviii. 21), "Then shall Jehovah be my God," or when Pharaoh asks (Ex. v. 2), "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice?" or when Moses said to Pharaoh that he would pray Jehovah to send a judgment on him, that he might know that the earth is Jehovah's (Ex. ix. 29); or when Moses cried, when he saw the people offering idolatrous homage to the calf, "Who is on the side of Jehovah?" (Ex. xxxii. 26); and a multitude of similar instances where, from the very circumstances of the case, only a proper name could be used. Such instances are obviously to be abstracted from; and when this is done with due care, it will be found that a very large proportion of the cases in which either word is used is accounted for without the aid of either of the hypotheses above stated. 3. Due regard does not seem to have been paid to the bearing of *exceptione* cases on the question at issue. It is a rule of the inductive method, that where any hypothesis is found irreconcilable with any ascertained fact which, if true, it ought to embrace, it must be set aside as thereby invalidated: "*Data instantia cadit inductio.*" Now there are instances of the use both of Jehovah and of Elohim in the O. T. which cannot be brought under either of these hypotheses; and from this it follows that both are logically unsound; each involves the fallacy of an "undistributed middle." Such exceptional passages, for instance, in relation to the document hypothesis are found in Gen. iv., which is said to be Jehovistic, but in which, at ver. 25, we find Elohim used; in Gen. vi. 1-6, where Jehovah and Elohim are both used; in Gen. xx., where Elohim is chiefly used, but where, in ver. 4 and ver. 18, we have Jehovah. Such instances are plainly utterly irreconcilable with the hypothesis of an original Elohist document with which a Jehovistic has at a later period been interwoven. Equally irreconcilable with both

hypotheses are those passages in which the narrative is plainly uniform and continuous, but where the document hypothesis would require us violently to dislocate the whole, and where it is impossible to discover any such differences of reference and application in the portions where the two divine appellations are used respectively, as a regard to the sense hypothesis would demand. To this objection we have never seen a fair and tenable answer. It is easy to say the passages are interpolated, or to suggest the agency of a second, third, or seventh reviser; but to men of scientific habits of research such expedients only serve the more to condemn the hypothesis they are adopted to save. 4. It would be well, before setting to work to form hypotheses affecting the integrity and genuineness of the sacred books, were some attempt made to settle on a solid basis the *criteria* by which questions of this sort are to be determined. Especially in relation to such a use as that before us it would be well to settle with some degree of precision, and by means of a large induction from the phenomena of literature, what kind and degree of variety in phraseology and style afford a safe criterion of diversity of authorship. At present it seems to be chiefly the critic's own subjectivity that determines his conclusion, the consequence of which is that different men arrive at conflicting conclusions, all of which are alike without any solid ground on which they can be rested. It would be well, before we dispute further on such points, that some *organon* of the higher criticism were in recognised use among critics.

These remarks are designed to point towards the desirableness of a reconsideration of the subject of the relation of Elohim to Jehovah in the usage of the sacred writers, from a more strictly scientific point of view than has hitherto been assumed. Learning has done its utmost in regard to this matter; all the facts of the case have been collected and elucidated by scholars of the first eminence; it is only from a juster application of the method of scientific investigation to these facts that any further light can be hoped for. As things stand now, the prevalence of the one term in a context rather than the other can be regarded in no other light than as one of those accidents of composition for which we are unable to account.



iii. The third class of names of God in the Bible are those which may be denominated ATTRIBUTIVE or EPITHETICAL. Of these the following are the chief:—

(i.)  $\text{יְהוָה}$  or  $\text{יְהוֹשֻׁעַ}$ . This seems to have been the earliest name of God; it belongs to the times of the patriarchs. Derived from the root  $\text{יָצַח}$ , the fundamental idea of which is “strong,” and which appears in the verb  $\text{יָצַח}$ , “to force,” “to lay waste,” this name characterizes God as revealing Himself in power and might. Hence in the LXX. and in the N. T. it is represented by the Gr. *παντοκράτωρ*, and in the A. V. it is correctly expressed by Almighty. It is not, however, the mightiness of God in the general, or as manifested in the government of the world at large, that is indicated by this name; rather is it His might as seen in subordinating nature to the interests of His spiritual kingdom, and in securing protection and blessing to His people. As Delitzsch has remarked, “אלהים is the God who forms nature so that it is, and upholds it so that it continues;  $\text{יְהוָה}$ , the God who compels nature so that it does what is contrary to itself, and controls it so that it bows to and serves grace; יהוה, the God who within nature effectuates grace, and ultimately in place of nature establishes a new creation of grace.”<sup>1</sup> The name Jehovah thus comes to supersede the name El Shaddai; and as the former unfolds its meaning, the latter recedes till it is ranked as only one of the general names of God, with  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$  and  $\text{אֱלֹהֵינוּ}$ . Only rarely, and in reference to special manifestations of the divine power on behalf of His people, is it used subsequently to the patriarchal age, as in Ruth i. 20; Ps. xci. 1; Isa. xiii. 6; Ezek. x. 5; Joel i. 15.

(ii.)  $\text{יְהוֹשֻׁעַ}$ , Θεὸς ζῶν, “the Living God.” This is involved in the concept of Jehovah: He who emphatically *is* necessarily exists, and is the Living One. As such He is placed in contrast with the gods of the heathen, which are dumb idols, mere nothings, that cannot help their votaries, or hear them when they cry (Deut. xxxii. 37–39).

(iii.)  $\text{יְהוֹשֻׁעַ}$ , LXX. ὑψιστος. By this name the divine supremacy is indicated: God sits supreme over the universe, enthroned in the heavens; comp. Gen. xiv. 20; Ps. xcvi. 9. This name was widely diffused among the Semitic peoples.

<sup>1</sup> *Genesis*, chap. xvii. 1, p. 371, 2nd ed.

We find it used by Melchizedek, the Canaanitish prince-priest (Gen. xiv. 18); it is the name by which the King of Babylon designates the Deity, to an equality with whom he proudly aspires to climb (Isa. xiv. 14); it is the name which the Phœnicians and Carthaginians gave to Saturn, their supreme god; and it appears in the *Pœnulus* of Plautus (v. 1. 1) as a general title of the gods and goddesses, for the "Alonim valonuth" of that passage are undoubtedly a transliteration of *עֲלִיּוֹנִים וְעֲלִיוֹנוּת*. We have this word also in the proper name Abdaloninus, *i.e.* עֲבֶר־עֲלִיּוֹן, servant of the highest; comp. Heb. עֲבֶר־אֵל and the modern Arab. *Abdallah*.

(iv.) אֵל עוֹלָם, *Θεὸς αἰώνιος*. God, the Living One, is the "Eternal One:" "I," saith He, "live for ever," הִי אֲנִי לְעוֹלָם, Deut. xxxii. 40; comp. also Ps. xc. Because God is thus eternal, and so independent of all change, He is at all times able and ready to succour and comfort His people; Isa. xl. 28; Ps. cii. 28.

(v.) אֵל צְבָאוֹת, *ὁ Θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων*, "God of Hosts." This designates God as the ruler of the celestial armies, as having power over all nature, as above the stars and heavenly bodies, as the Lord of angels and celestial powers, who delight to do His bidding and fulfil His will. This name does not occur in the Pentateuch, or in the earlier historical books, but it is very common in the prophetic writings, except that of Ezekiel; nor does it occur in Job, or any of the writings ascribed to Solomon.

To these may be added such terms as אָב, *πατήρ*; אֱלֹהֵי, *δεσπότης, κύριος*, which, however, are hardly to be reckoned as names of God, being descriptive rather of relations in which He stands to His creatures than of Himself.

The names of God in the Bible reveal Him to us as the supreme, all-governing Being, to whom all power and authority belong, to whom reverence and worship are due, and who dwells in the majesty of His own essential being, having a name which none but Himself can bear, and a glory which He will not give to another.

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## CHAPTER III.

## GOD.

## II. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

*Preliminary.*

The names of God being all significant, it seemed a fitting introduction to the consideration of what He would have us to know concerning Himself that we should consider those appellations in which He has been pleased to symbolize, as it were, His perfections. We now proceed to consider these perfections as they are more fully set forth for our study in His word and in His works.

This branch of theology is commonly designated that which treats of *the divine attributes*. The subject is one which admits of a very copious treatment; but according to the plan I have laid down for myself, I shall content myself with merely sketching out the wide field in outline, referring you to books where you will be aided in studying it in detail for yourselves.

By the attributes or perfections<sup>1</sup> of God, we mean those qualities which we ascribe to Him for the purpose of expressing our conceptions of His infinite essence in relation to the universe and to ourselves.

In the outset there are certain erroneous or confused modes of thought upon this subject of which we must be careful to purge our minds.

1. We must not think of the attributes of God as qualities superadded to His essence. This caution is necessary because, as we naturally pass from conceptions drawn from ourselves or the objects around us to conceptions of God, and as the qualities we see in ourselves or surrounding objects are for the most part something added to the essential nature of the object, and consequently capable of being detached from it, there is a danger of our thinking of the divine attributes in

<sup>1</sup> By the Greek Fathers they are called *ἄξιώματα*, *ἄξίαι*, and *νόηματα*.

the same way. Thus, *e.g.*, when we ascribe to a man strength, or wisdom, or goodness, we impute to him qualities which are not essential to him as a man, qualities which at one time perhaps he had not at all, and of which he may come to be utterly divested. Now, in thinking of God, we must abstract from all such modes of conceiving His attributes. He can receive no addition, experience no change. "*Nunquam novus, nunquam vetus,*" as Augustine expresses it. His attributes, therefore, are Himself—He, not His. Their relativity to Him is apparent only, not real, arising simply from our modes of contemplating Him. On this point all the great divines are agreed. "His attributes are not accidental, but as respects the thing itself, they are the very essence of God viewed under this or the other mode or respect of considering it. For if they were accidents, they would add a new entity and perfection, and the essence of God would not be in itself perfect."<sup>1</sup> "The divine attributes do not denote anything added to the divine essence, but are only inadequate conceptions of an essence infinitely perfect. The divine essence is like an incomprehensible ocean of all infinite perfections, which the human intellect is impotent to exhaust in one simple conception, and hence by various conceptions, as if sip by sip, it draws somewhat out of that infinity."<sup>2</sup> Hence it came to be laid down as a locus or position in theology: "*Attributa divina in se ac per se considerata sunt realiter et simplicissime unum cum divina essentia.*"

Here it may perhaps occur to some of you to ask, If the attributes of God are not to be severed from His essence, why speak of His essence and His attributes as separate objects of consideration? This question leads me to remind you that what is in reality one and indivisible may be distinguished in thought. This is what the old divines meant when they said on the point before us that the divine attributes are distinguished from the divine essence, "*non ex natura rei, sed ratione tantum.*" A distinction "*ex natura rei*" is one which affirms a difference of things, such as *body* and *rotundity*; a distinction *ratione* is one which simply affirms that what cannot be distinguished in reality may be conceived or thought

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *Systema Loc. Theol.* ii. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, *Theol. Didactico-polemica*, etc., i. 297.

discriminatively. It may place this in a clearer light if I state historically the process of thought on this subject. Among the schoolmen, then, whilst all admitted that the distinction is subjective, *i.e.* that the attributes of God have not such an objective reality that they can be objectively distinguished from the divine essence and from each other, but are only so regarded by us, the question was discussed whether the attributes of God are to be distinguished from the essence of God *realiter* or only *nominaliter*, *i.e.* whether the distinction is one actually existing, or only a distinction of names as applied by us. When these questions passed from the schoolmen to the divines of the Reformation, both sides of this alternative were discussed, and it was decided that the distinction was neither *realiter*, nor simply *nominaliter*, but *formaliter*, *i.e.* "secundum nostrum concipiendis modum." In this conclusion the best theologians may be said now to rest. The distinction is subjective rather than objective; "it is founded, not in inner distinctions in the divine essence, but in the accompanying representations with which the idea of this is placed in combination;"<sup>1</sup> or, as Quenstedt expresses it, "the foundation of this distinction are various extrinsic things known along with it, as, *e.g.*, diverse effects or respects or negations according to which God is conceived by us."

Whilst, however, we hold the attributes of God to be distinguishable from His essence only as thought by us, we must guard against the extreme of regarding this distinction as purely arbitrary or fictitious. Into this extreme some modern divines of Germany have fallen. Thus Hase does not hesitate to ascribe the whole conception of divine attributes "to poetry and popular instruction rather than to science;" and Schleiermacher lays it down as one of his theological positions, that "the attributes which we ascribe to God cannot denote anything special in God, but only something special in the manner in which our feeling of entire dependence on Him is referred;" and he ascribes the introduction of this mode of contemplating God "to the religious poetry of the Church, and to the popular experience which sought to vivify and confirm the simple representation of the Supreme Being by

<sup>1</sup> Twisten, ii. 27.

speaking of Him in expressions such as we are wont to use of finite beings."<sup>1</sup> This, however, is carrying the subjectivity of this mode of representing God much too far. When we ascribe to God certain attributes, I think it essential to the validity of the conception that we should believe that there is in God something that actually corresponds to these; in other words, that when He manifests what we call an attribute, He acts according to a necessity or propriety of His own nature. They are not real distinctions in God, as if He were confounded and not a pure simple essence; they are only distinctions which appear to us, and which we name from analogy with ourselves; but they have a ground or foundation in the nature of God. They are not mere poetical fictions, nor are they accommodations to popular feeling; they are, like all other anthropomorphisms, human modes of conceiving and expressing actual facts in God as revealed to us. As the Thomists expressed it, "*Attributa Dei different tantum ratione, sed fundamentum habent ex natura rei.*"<sup>2</sup> "Simplicity of essence," says Quenstedt, who has written admirably on this subject, "does not abolish the verity of the divine attributes, but it excludes composition. It is one thing to think what is in act and reality *one* in God, as if in act and reality *manifold*; it is another to conceive what in God is one, as virtually or by eminence manifold. The former would be wholly false; the latter is not false, though inadequate."<sup>3</sup>

2. As the attributes of God are not something really distinct from Him, so they are not really distinct from each other. "God," says Augustine, "may be spoken of *multipliciter*, as great, good, wise, blessed, true, and whatever else may not unworthily be ascribed to Him. But His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for it is not by mass that He is great, but by virtue. And His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all these. It is not one thing with Him to be blessed, and another to be great or wise, or true or good, or altogether to be Himself."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubenslehre*, i. 255, 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Index to St. Thomas's *Summa*, under "*I. Attributa*," with relative passage.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. viii. sec. 2, qu. 2, *in* 6.

<sup>4</sup> *De Trinitate*, vi. 7.

This, like the former, is necessitated by the simplicity of God. Were His attributes really distinct qualities, the totality of His essence would be the sum or complement of these separate qualities, and hence He would not be pure essence, but a composite essence, and so capable of division, and therefore of dissolution. It is essential, therefore, to a just conception of God that we should regard these attributes not merely as all in harmony, but as in reality one. They differ not *in re*, but *formaliter*; *i.e.* we think them virtually different because we have no other way of expressing or conceiving the different relations in which different things stand to the one indivisible and unchangeable Jehovah. As the sun illuminates, warms, melts, hardens, and does many different acts at one and the same time, and by one and the same power (so far at least as we know), whilst we feel ourselves constrained to attribute to it various powers by which these different acts are accomplished; so, in endeavouring to construe to our minds the one God in His different relations to the universe, we ascribe His diversities of operation to different perfections or attributes. Or we may take an illustration from the constitution of our own minds, which are one and indivisible, but to which we ascribe diverse powers or faculties, these being not real entities, but simply, as Addison expresses it, "the different ways or modes in which the soul can exert herself."<sup>1</sup>

The point now before us is one on which there have been controversies in the Church since a very early period. In the 4th century, during the Arian controversy, it came up in consequence of Eusebius of Cappadocia maintaining the capacity of man to understand God, and holding that the perfections of God were in Him as our qualities are in us. He was opposed by Gregory of Nyssa and by Augustine. Among the schoolmen, especially in the 14th century, the disputes of the Nominalists and Realists brought into prominence the question whether the divine attributes are to be distinguished *realiter* or only *nominaliter*; the Scotists holding by the latter side of the alternative, while the Thomists adopted a sort of middle course, and held, as already mentioned, that the distinction was not *in re* but *in ratione*, and that not "per

<sup>1</sup> *Spectator*, No. 600.

meram operationem intellectus, sed cui est fundamentum ali-quod in re." In later times the Socinians have revived the Eunomian doctrine, that the attributes of God are really distinct from His essence; their end being to obtain a firmer footing for their denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It may be worth while in a few quotations to show the current of orthodox belief on this subject from the early sages downwards:—

Athanasius: "But these [attributes] are not like a certain quality (*ποιότης*) in Him; away with this! it is unbecoming (*ἀπρεπές*); for God would thus be found compounded of substance and quality; for every quality is in a substance, and according to this the divine indivisible monad would appear as being compounded, being divided into essence and accident." <sup>1</sup>

Cyrril of Jerusalem: "We speak concerning God, not what is necessary (for to Himself alone are these things known), but such things as our weakness is able to carry. For we do not expound what God is, but acknowledge with candour that we know not the exactitude concerning Him; for in things relating to God a great part of knowledge is to confess ignorance." <sup>2</sup>

Augustine: "A nature is called simple on this ground, that it is one to which it does not appertain to have anything which either may be lost, or so that what has should be one thing and what it has another; such as a vessel having some fluid, or a body heat, or the air light or warmth, or the soul wisdom. None of these is that which it has; for the vessel is not the fluid, nor the body the heat, nor the air the light or warmth, nor the soul wisdom. Hence it is that these may be deprived of that which it has, and may be turned and changed into other habits and qualities, as the vessel may be emptied of the fluid of which it is full," etc. <sup>3</sup>

Anselm: "If it be incomprehensible how the Supreme Wisdom knows those things which He does [His works], of which we must needs know so much, who will explain how He knows Himself concerning whom nothing or next to

<sup>1</sup> *Cont. Arian.* iv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Cat.* vi. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *De Civit. Dei*, book xi. chap. x.



nothing is known by us?" Anselm, however, contends that "we may discourse truly concerning the divine nature though that nature remain ineffable, provided we do not think it as expressed by the propriety of its essence, but signified so far as it is by means of something else."<sup>1</sup>

In the Middle Ages a fierce controversy arose between the Scotists and Thomists as to whether we have a knowledge of the quiddity of God merely (*cognitio quidditatis Dei*) or a quidditive knowledge of God as well (*cognitio quidditiva Dei*). Such phraseology may appear to us ridiculous, but the distinction it expresses is a real one. A knowledge of the quiddity of God is a knowledge of something essentially belonging to Him and characterizing Him; a quidditive knowledge of God is a knowledge of all that belongs to Him, His entire nature, so that nothing remains hid. This higher knowledge the Scotists held man capable of acquiring; and in opposition to them the Thomists maintained that we do not thus know God thoroughly, but possess only a knowledge of His habitude or manner of acting towards His creatures. Thomas Aquinas himself thus states his views on the distinction of the attributes: "Our intellect, since it cognizes God from creatures, forms in order to know God conceptions proportioned to the perfections proceeding from God to His creatures. Which perfections pre-exist, indeed, in God unitedly and simpliciter, but in creatures are received dividedly and in multiplicity. Therefore, as to the diverse perfections of the creatures there responds one simple principle represented variously and by multiplicity in the diverse perfections of creatures, so to the various and manifold concepts of our intellect there responds one wholly simple, but according to these conceptions imperfectly understood. And hence the names attributed to God, though they signify one thing, yet because they signify it under many and diverse relations, are not synonymous."<sup>2</sup>

I have already cited several passages from the older Lutheran divines, Twisten, Calovius, Quenstedt, etc., bearing on this subject. I shall only therefore add two brief testimonies from this source.

Gerhard: "The attributes of God are in Him inseparable;

<sup>1</sup> *Monolog.* c. xxxi. and lxxv.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa*, part i. qu. 13, art. 4.

for as it is impossible to separate the essence of a thing from the thing itself, so also the attributes cannot be separated from God, since they are the essence of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Calovius : “ If they really differed from the essence after the manner of accidents, there would be composition in God ; and since accidents are by nature posterior to essence, there would be a prior and posterior in the order of nature in God, which things are *ἀπιστα*. If they were distinct really, they could not be predicated of God in the abstract, and yet He is called in the abstract Truth, Life, Love. If the power differed from the essence of God, He would not be *αὐτεξούσιος*, of Himself powerful, but on account of power superadded to His essence.”

In the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches this question does not appear to have excited so much notice as in the Lutheran. We can, however, from this source also adduce some very decided testimonies. I select the following :—

Turretine : “ The orthodox teach that the attributes are really identical with the essence of God, but that they are distinguished virtually and by eminence. . . . The attributes of God cannot in reality differ from His essence, or one from another as thing and thing, because God is in the highest degree simple and perfect. . . . Yet that the attributes of God differ as well from His essence as from each other, is clear from the diversity of the conceptions. For where there is reason for founding distinct formal conceptions of anything though in itself one and simple, there of necessity is given some distinction virtual and eminent ”<sup>2</sup> [that is, as Turretine himself explains it, there is a distinction determined either by the thing containing potentially different effects, or by possessing in union what in others are distinct, or by having eminent efficiency, which may be the principle of diverse actions].  
 Marek : “ The attributes of God are perfections by which He presents Himself to be known by us feeble ones, and is more distinguished from creatures. These are not distinct in reality, either from one another or from God Himself, because of God's independence, simplicity, and immutability ; but only as respects their objects, effects, and our mode of conceiving. Commonly the difference is said to be *rationis ratiocinata*,

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. Theol.* iii. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenct.* vol. i. p. 206.

which is said to have some foundation in the thing,"—as distinct from a *distinctio rationis ratiocinantis*, which is the product of a mere operation of the intellect.<sup>1</sup> Venema: "In a *positive* sense this property [simplicity] denotes that all the attributes of God are essential to His nature, so that they are identified with it; and though they are various according to the aspect in which they are viewed, they are nevertheless in manner and degree immutable as His nature itself. They are, moreover, so connected that one involves, is inseparable from, and draws along with it the others. Not that one is another, for the ideas we form of them are different; but that one requires another, and that all are linked together by an inseparable bond. God therefore, in a positive sense, is a simple uncompounded Being, inasmuch as His attributes are always the same, and cannot be dissociated from one another. In a *negative* sense, this property consists in God's entire exemption from every kind of composition."<sup>2</sup> Stapfer: "Whatever follows from the essence of God and cannot be separated from it is called a Divine Attribute. The divine attributes are variously enumerated, but they do not differ from each other, but are distinguished only by our mode of conceiving them; for whatever is in God, is God Himself."<sup>3</sup>

It may illustrate the perfect harmony of divines on this subject if to these testimonies of Lutheran and Calvinistic divines I add the declaration of Arminius: "Whatever is absolutely predicated of God is to be understood essentially and not accidentally; and those things which are predicated of God are in God not many, but one (Jas. i. 17): It is only in our mode of considering them, which is a compound mode, that they are distinguished as being many and diverse; though this may not inappropriately be said—because they are likewise distinguished by a formal reason."<sup>4</sup>

Descending to more recent divines, I could fill page after page with extracts from them enunciating the same doctrine, but it is unnecessary; it is a doctrine in which all evangelical

<sup>1</sup> *Medulla Christianæ Theologiæ*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes of Theology*, translated from original MS. by Brown, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup> *Instit. Theol. Polem.* i. p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> *Works* by Nichols ii. p. 115. See also Limborch, *Theol. Christianæ*, book ii. chap. ii.

writers are unanimous so far as they have touched on it. A few may be found who still hold by the Nominalist doctrine, that the distinction of the attributes from the essence of God and from each other is due only to finite modes of thinking and feeling, and so is really an illusion; but the majority hold that whilst these attributes are not to be regarded as really distinct, there is ground in the reality for the distinction which we make formally. We may call them "redintegrations and applications of the concept of God" (Nitzsch), or "Concepts of the concept of God in relation to the world," or we may resort to simple phrase and say (with Twisten) that "they express real relations in which God stands to the finite, or rather in which it stands to Him, and which we, according to our narrow modes of representation, must present individually if we would not merely in words acknowledge the infinitude of His being and working, but would also in some measure rise to Him in our thoughts;"<sup>1</sup> but the sentiment is substantially the same. I shall therefore confine myself here to one extract, which I give chiefly because of the admirable statement, as it appears to me, which it furnishes of the whole subject now before us. It is from the *Christliche Dogmatik* of Dr. Martensen: "The divine essence manifests itself in its attributes. Were God simple unity (*das einfach Eine*), the mystic abyss in which all precision (or definiteness) was swallowed up (*τὸ ἀπλῶς εἶναι*), there would be nothing further to be known in this unity. But the living God manifests the unity of His essence through a multiplicity of essential determinations or attributes. These attributes express one and the same essence from different sides; they are different fundamental outcomings of one essence. They are consequently not outside of each other, but in each other; they mutually interpenetrate and have their point of unity in one and the same divine personality. Though they are thus distinctions which may be removed as well as adhibited, yet they are by no means to be viewed as mere human modes of conceiving the divine essence; they are not human modes of conceiving, but God's own modes of manifestation. We cannot, therefore, assent to the Nominalist doctrine, which treats ideas and general con-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 27.

cepts as *ours*, and hence also the concepts with which we denote the Divine Being as simply the expression of *our* theory of the universe, not as something in God Himself. Whilst we admit that the idea of God must be purged of all that is *simply* human, of all false anthropomorphisms, we must nevertheless regard Nominalism as destroying the concept of *manifestation* (or revelation). There is a destruction of the innermost truth of the faith, if it is only we who think God as Holy and Just, whilst He Himself is not Holy and Just,—if it is only we who invoke Him by these names, while He Himself does not so make Himself known to us. Hence we teach with Realism that the attributes of God are objective determinations in the revelation of God, and consequently have their root in His inner being.”<sup>1</sup>

3. Having reached correct and precise views as to what we mean by the attributes of God, the next question that comes up to us respects the way in which we arrive at the conception of these attributes—the method, that is, by which we gather from nature or are taught in the Scriptures the knowledge of God in His attributes.

In answer to this I have to call your attention to a distribution which has come down to us from a very early period in the history of dogmatic theology, and is still recognised by theologians. According to this, there are three ways in which the divine attributes become known to us: (1) *Via negationis* (κατ’ ἀφαίρεσιν), by which we remove from God all the imperfection belonging to creatures and pronounce Him free from this; (2) *Via eminentiæ* (κατὰ σχέσιν), by which we ascribe to God in infinity whatever excellences we find in creatures according to their measure; and (3) *Via causalitatis* (κατὰ φύσιν), by which we conclude that those perfections are in God which are required by the production and conservation of the universe. Of these it is evident that the first two must always go together; for we cannot pronounce God free from imperfection without ascribing to Him infinite excellence. It is evident also that we must confine the teachings of the way of eminence with those of the way of causality in order to reach just views of God; for it is only as we ascribe to God that intelligence in perfection which we find in measure

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Dogmatik*, p. 112, 3rd ed.

in ourselves that we think of Him as God, or as something different from a mere world-power. Thus it appears that all these methods mutually supplement each other, and that it is from the whole that we obtain just views of God so far as such are attainable by us.

This distribution is due, in the first instance, to a Neo-Platonist writer of the 4th or 5th century who wrote under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite. It figures prominently in the writings of the schoolmen, and has been generally adopted by modern divines. Though not, of course, explicitly announced in Scripture, all the three methods it embraces are employed by the sacred writers. Thus when God says (Mal. iii. 6), "I am Jehovah, I change not," or when it is said, "God is not a man that He should lie, or the son of man that He should repent" (Num. xxiii. 19), we are taught by the way of negation. When the prophet asks (Isa. xl. 18), "To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" or when our Lord says (Matt. vii. 11), "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him," we are taught by the way of eminence; and when Paul reasoned with the Athenians, that if we are the offspring of God "we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or stone graven by art and man's device," he taught them by the way of causality. For the principle of this distribution, therefore, we have the highest authority.

But this principle is not only one recommended to us by authority, it is one which lies deep in the very nature of the case. It is evolved necessarily out of our very idea of God as an intelligent Being distinct from the world, and on whom the world depends. We can predicate His absolute distinctness from the world only by affirming His immunity from all those limitations that characterize the world of creatures; we can construe the dependence of the world on Him only by regarding Him as endowed with all those powers which are needful for the creation and upholding of it; and we can reverence Him as an intelligent and moral agent only by ascribing to Him in the highest degree those qualities which essentially characterize intelligent and moral natures. In

this distribution, therefore, we recognise not a mere arbitrary or empirical method, but one which has a real and abiding basis in the object-matter of discourse.

True and valuable, however, as this method is in itself, it cannot be held as of itself complete or sufficient. Strictly speaking, there are innumerable imperfections and limitations which must be denied of God; innumerable operations which must be ascribed to Him; so that the question arises how all these are to be arranged and discriminated so as to enable us to obtain a definite and yet exhaustive enumeration of the divine attributes. To accomplish this, recourse has been had to a classification of these, and by this means the end may be in some measure reached, provided the classification be sufficiently comprehensive to prescribe for each attribute its proper place and sphere. But, after all that we may attempt in this direction, it will be found that we can make only a more or less near approach to such a classification, and that no scheme yet proposed is perfect.

4. Different schemes of classification have been proposed with a view of securing a just and luminous survey of the divine attributes. The following is a digest of these schemes, with the principle on which each is based. I. According to the form in which they are expressed, they are arranged as *proper* or *metaphorical*, *affirmative* or *negative*; thus eternal self-existence is counted a proper and affirmative attribute, whilst unchangeableness is regarded as metaphorical and negative. II. According to their inner relation to each other, as *primitive* or *derivative*; thus absolute perfection may be held as a primitive attribute of God, and all the rest as derived from it; or love or holiness may be fixed on as the primitive of which the rest are derivatives. III. According to God's relation to the world, as *immanent*, *quiescent*, *internal*, *absolute*, or *transient*, *operative*, *external*, *relative*; thus unity, truth, goodness, etc., are ranked as immanent perfections of God,—perfections resting in His being, while omnipotence, grace, justice, etc., are regarded as transient or outcoming perfections,—passing, so to speak, from God over upon His creatures. IV. According to their relation to human capabilities, as *communicable* and *imitable*, or *incommunicable* and *inimitable*, the latter being the special characteristics of God, such as self-

existence, infinity, omnipotence, whilst the former may exist in measure in His creatures, such as goodness and truth. V. According to their inner compass or tenor, as *general* and *ontological*—such as belong to the divine nature viewed *per se*, or *special*—such as are derived from the idea of God as a spiritual essence; thus eternity, immensity, immutability, etc., are ontological attributes; while omniscience, wisdom, holiness, etc., are special attributes. VI. According to the analogy of man's nature, as *metaphysical* and *natural*, or *moral*, the former including such perfections as belong to the divine essence, the latter such as characterize His mind and will. These are by some distinguished also as *universal* or *special*. VII. According to the varied relation of the consciousness of God to the pious feeling as determined—1. by the feeling of dependence apart from any sense of guilt—eternity, omnipotence, etc.; 2. by the feeling of antithesis created by a sense of sin—holiness and righteousness; and 3. by the feeling of difference arising from a sense of God's grace—love and wisdom. This is Schleiermacher's scheme, and it bears traces at once of the genius of the man, by which he made everything seem to fall in with his peculiar hypothesis, and of the fanciful and purely subjective character of all his modes of thought.

I have thought it right to give you this sketch of these different schemes, that you may at your leisure examine them for yourselves, and adopt or reject as you may think best. It would lead us into a discussion of too protracted a kind for the limits of this course were I to subject each of them to a minute criticism; and without a *minute* criticism I apprehend justice could not be done, either to the subject itself or to our own convictions regarding it. Suffice it to say, then, that whilst none of these can be regarded as perfect, that which on the whole I think is to be preferred is the one numbered VI. in the digest above given. I prefer this, partly because it is the common division followed in this country, and it is not desirable to depart from the common path except for some very cogent reason; partly because, as we have all along gone upon the principle that the concept of God is formed by us after the analogy of our own spiritual nature, there is a decided propriety and advantage in adopting a scheme of the divine attributes based on this principle in preference to any other.



Be it ever borne in mind, however, that whilst we distinguish the natural or metaphysical perfections of God from the mental and ethical, we do so merely in accommodation to our own limited modes of thinking; in themselves these cannot be separated; they are co-ordinate, harmonious, and equal manifestations of that one infinite essence which no man hath seen or can see.

The metaphysicæal or natural perfections of God are those which are manifested in relation to Being in general; His moral perfections are those which have respect to His relations to Being in particular, such as the created universe, intelligent or sentient existences, etc.

### i. *Natural Perfections of God.*

Now BEING or EXISTENCE, as it manifests itself to us, may be contemplated in three relations or under three conditions, as 1. Existence in Time = Protensive Being; 2. Existence in Space = Extensive Being; and 3. Existence in Degree = Intensive Being. In speaking of the natural perfections of God it may be of advantage to take note of these distinctions; and, whilst keeping ever in mind that such conditions apply to the divine existence, not directly, but only analogically, to consider these perfections under the three heads thus marked out.

(i.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence in time, or protensive existence.* Here we proceed wholly by the *via negationis*, all the perfections of God under this head being simply the negation in Him of any of those limits which time imposes on us. Thus we ascribe to Him—

1. *Eternal Existence*, by which, in other words, we deny that He ever began to be—or that He can cease to be, or that He is subject to any succession of existence. He is wholly above and beyond time, and His eternity is (as Schleiermacher has expressed it) “the timeless primal causality of God, conditioning not only the temporal, but time itself.” He is the Source and Lord of Time, and contains in Himself its reason and order—“Operator omnium Temporum,” as Augustine says, “Omnia tempora Tu fecisti, et ante omnia tempora Tu es.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Confess.* xi. 12, 13, p. 213, ed. Pusey.

In the Scriptures this perfection of God is frequently and emphatically insisted on. God is before all, and endures for ever; He is from eternity to eternity, Ps. xc. 2; and of His years there is no end, Ps. cii. 27. He is *ἄφθαρτος*, "incorruptible," passes not away, Rom. i. 23; and He alone hath immortality, 1 Tim. vi. 16. In our relations to time we are wholly different from Him; for with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, Ps. xc. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 8. He is emphatically *αἰώνιος*, eternal—not only exempt from temporal sequence and temporal limitations, but also the actual cause of time and time's things.<sup>1</sup> Comp. also Ps. cii. 25–27; Gen. xxi. 33; Isa. xl. 28, xli. 4, etc.

Theologians have distinguished eternity *a parte ante* from eternity *a parte post*. The former, when affirmed of God, is tantamount to an assertion of His self-existence. The eternal existence of God involves, as a matter of course, His self-existence; for that which has been from all eternity cannot have been derived or caused. God has the ground of His being in Himself alone; He exists from and according to His own inner essentiality. It is wrong to speak of Him as self-caused, for He is absolutely uncaused. Even such an expression as "aseitas," that commonly used by theologians to indicate His self-existence, is to be avoided, for we can hardly think God as being *from* Himself without thinking Him as in some sense self-caused. What is intended is that God exists by the necessity of His own nature, that He has the ground or reason of His existence in Himself, that He exists "of and by Himself, and with all actual perfection originally in His own essence." When eternity *a parte post* is attributed to Him, it is affirmed that His existence shall never terminate, that He is *ἄφθαρτος*, and has in Himself *ἀθανασία*. The Bible affirms both of these of God; He is *עוֹלָם וָעוֹלָם*, and it combines both in the epithet *αἰώνιος* as applied to Him. It is probably with reference to the same idea that the apostle denominates God *Βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων*, 1 Tim. i. 17.

"Anni tui," exclaims Augustine, addressing God, "dies

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *Christliche Lehre*, p. 159.

unus; et dies tuus non quotidie sed hodie, quia hodiernus tuus non cedit crastino; neque enim succedit hesterno. Hodiernus tuus Æternitas.”<sup>1</sup>

2. As God exists out of time and is above time, so He is not subject to any change through the lapse of time. Hence we ascribe to God as an attribute *unchangeableness* or *immutability*, by which we intend that neither as respects His essence, His perfections, His knowledge, nor as respects His purposes, is He capable of change; in other words, we affirm the perpetual identity of the divine essence in itself and in its attributes, and deny that there is in God any change physical, intellectual, or ethical. He never advances, never recedes. With Him there is no succession, no vicissitude. He inhabits eternity. He occupies a perpetual Now.

This attribute is inseparable from the former.<sup>2</sup> We can, indeed, think unchangeableness apart from eternal self-existence; and we can conceive a being who shall exist for ever and yet be liable to change; as, on the other hand, we can conceive a being who shall be unchangeable as long as he exists and yet not exist for ever. But, in reality, eternity and immutability are inseparable; for that which changes must have begun to be, and may cease to be. Self-existence also necessitates immutability; for to affirm that a being exists by the necessity of his own nature, is tantamount to asserting that he cannot but be what he is. Unchangeableness is also inseparable from the divine perfection; for he that changes becomes at each change either less perfect or more perfect than he was before, *i.e.* he either loses something he had, or gains something he had not before; and to affirm this of an All-Perfect Being would be a contradiction in terms.

The unchangeableness of God is affirmed in Scripture repeatedly, and in striking terms; see Ps. cii. 26; Mal. iii. 6; Eccles. iii. 14; Jas. i. 17; Heb. xiii. 8.

(ii.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence*

<sup>1</sup> *Confess.* p. 213, ed. Pusey.

<sup>2</sup> Ἀναλλοίωτος καθὼς ἀθανάτος ἐστίν, Theoph. *ad Autolyc.* i. 4. “Deum immutabilem et informabilem credi necesse est, ut æternum. Transfiguratio autem interemptio est pristini,” Tertull. *adv. Præream*, 27.

*in space, or extensive existence.* Here we proceed again wholly by the way of negation. We deny 1. that God exists in space. Space, like time, belongs to Him, not He to it. He has no composition of parts, no form or figure. Hence He is *indivisible*—a simple essence. Hence the *immensity* of God, whom no space can enclose, no limits define. Hence, too, the *invisibility* of God; for as the proper object of sight is coloured and figured extension, sight cannot discern Him who is without parts or form. 2. We deny that God is limited by space in His operations, that is to say, He moves and acts on all things irrespective of any limits imposed by space. As Schleiermacher expresses it, "This is the spaceless causality of God conditioning all space and all things in space."

These two negations constitute what is commonly called the *omnipresence* of God. Some divines have distinguished between substantial omnipresence and operative omnipresence, by the former of which they intend that God's *essence* is everywhere, and by the latter that His *operative power* or *energy* is everywhere present. If by this is meant nothing more than that neither in essence nor in operation is God limited by conditions of space, and that when He operates it is not by a *diffused* energy or virtue, such as that, for instance, by which fire operates, but by an immediate influence, the statement coalesces with the positions above laid down, and must consequently be accepted by us. But if this distinction is adhibited for the purpose of setting aside the former kind of omnipresence and adopting the latter as the only real one, it must be rejected as landing us in a conclusion which is not only inadequate, but also erroneous. In this case the omnipresence of God would be virtual only, not actual; just as the sun is virtually present throughout the sphere it illuminates or warms, though actually limited in space, and far distant from the objects on which it operates. This is the doctrine of the Socinians, to which some of the Remonstrant party and many Rationalists incline.<sup>1</sup>

In the Scriptures this distinction is not made. They speak of God's presence everywhere, through all space, without distinguishing His *adessentia* or real presence from His *præsentia*.

<sup>1</sup> See Hahn, *Christliche Glaubensl.* p. 187.

*operativa* or operative presence; comp. 1 Kings viii. 27; Ps. cxxxix. 7-13, xliii. 2, lxvi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24; Amos ix. 2, 3; Acts xvii. 24-28.

In this respect the older divines followed the Scriptures. Calovius defines the divine omnipresence as the "attribute by virtue of which God, not only by propinquity of substance, but by efficacious operation, is present with all His creatures." Quenstedt says the divine omnipresence "infers two things: 1. Propinquity and adessence to the creatures, substantial, illocal, uncircumscribable, and indivisible, which the schoolmen call *immediatio suppositi*; 2. efficacious and omnipotent operation, which they call *immediatio virtutis*." In like manner Gerhard, Hollaz, Buddeus, Turretine, etc. Even Limborch, though usually inclining to the Remonstrants, in this instance vigorously opposes them.

Of this omnipresence of God it is impossible for us to form any *positive* conception, to say nothing of any *adequate* one. All attempts to construe a real omnipresence that has no definite relation to space, we find to be beyond our reach; the subject eludes our grasp, and the more we try to hold it the more do we feel our impotency to apprehend it. All we can say, I believe, is (to quote the words of Dr. Payne), that "by the omnipresence of Deity we mean, that in some manner unintelligible to us He is present in every part of space and in every moment of time."<sup>1</sup>

In attempting to express ourselves on this subject it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to avoid using, on the one hand, words that convey no meaning; and, on the other, to utter sentiments not distinguishable from Pantheism. What idea, for instance, is conveyed to the mind by the assertion of Augustine, "*Deus non alicubi est*"? or that of Des Cartes, "*Deus est nusquam, sive nullibi*"? And if, on the other hand, we say with Augustine, "*In illo sunt omnia*," is it possible for us to construe the assertion logically to the mind without predicating of God something like the Spinozistic doctrine, that He is identical with the extended or material creation? We even need to beware how we speak or think of Him as filling all space, being actually present everywhere,

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, etc., i. p. 50.

and so on, or use of Him such language as Pope, for instance, employs when he says,—

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul ;  
That, changed through all and yet in all the same ;  
Great in the earth as in the æthereal frame,  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glowes in the stars, and blossoms in the trees ;  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent ;  
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
As full as perfect in a hair as heart ;  
As full as perfect in vile man that mourns,  
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns.  
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small,  
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all—”<sup>1</sup>

Or use such language as Newton and Clarke have employed when they call space “the sensorium of Deity ;” or listen to the Roman poet when he exclaims,—

“ Jupiter est quodcumque vidēs, quocumque moveris ;”<sup>2</sup>

Or assent to the Roman philosopher when he says to one who ascribed his gifts to nature, “Non intelliges te, cum hoc dicis, mutare nomen Dei? Quid enim aliud est Natura quam Deus, et divina ratio toti mundo et partibus ejus inserta?”<sup>3</sup> There is a sense in which all these statements are true as well as striking; but they may be made the vehicle of conveying dangerous and false views of God’s presence in the universe. Viewed merely as analogical and anthropomorphic modes of representing the divine omnipresence, they are worthy of commendation; but taken literally and logically, they would land us in Pantheism by either identifying God with the created universe or making Him the “anima mundi,” the “spiritus intus,” that moves and vivifies the inert mass. On a subject of this sort we cannot too carefully remember how utterly impossible it is for us to speak otherwise than by imperfect images and enigmas. “On a subject,” says Dugald Stewart, “so infinitely disproportioned to our faculties, it is vain to expect language that will bear a logical examination. Even the sacred

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. l. 267–280.

<sup>2</sup> Lucan, *Pharsalia*.

<sup>3</sup> Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, Bk. iv. chap. 7.

writers themselves," he continues, "are forced to adapt their phraseology to the comprehension of those to whom it is addressed, and frequently borrow the figurative diction of poetry to convey ideas which must be interpreted, not according to the letter, but the spirit of the passage."<sup>1</sup>

The negation of space as limiting God stands closely connected with the assertion of the *divine spirituality*. "God is a spirit,"—perhaps the only pure and absolute spirit in the universe. But when we say this, what do we mean? Obviously nothing more than that He is a living personal power, not limited by the conditions of space. Beyond this we can form no idea of absolute spirit. He is a Being who cannot be seen or touched, a Being who is not extended or figured, a Being who does not need to move from place to place in order to be actually present in any given place. By these propositions we assert His spirituality, and by these also His omnipresence and immateriality. These, then, are substantially one and the same attribute; and so the Bible speaks of them; comp. 1's. cxxxix. 7; John iv. 24. It is in connection with this that God is emphatically called in Scripture by the frequently recurring phrase "The living God"—a phrase which, as has been remarked, is used not only to distinguish Him from idols, but to convey to us that He is the living one *in se*, since the Spirit of God is in continuous act.<sup>2</sup> Hence some of the old divines maintained that "*Dens est actus purus*," or "*actus simplicissimus*,"—a position by which they sought to intimate that God, as the infinite Life, contains within Himself the sum or complement of all actual and possible modes of being. "God," says Nietzsche, "is not a spirit; but God is spirit, *i.e.* perfect consummate life; He has the complement of being; whereby He is distinguished, not only from the pretended gods as the living and true, but from all other actual life and being as He who alone hath immortality, and as the Creator of all things."<sup>3</sup>

(iii.) *Natural perfections of God viewed in relation to existence in degree, or intensive existence.*—Here we still proceed

<sup>1</sup> *Dissert.* p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> See Hall's Sermon on Isa. xxxi. 3. *Works*, vols. v. and vi.

<sup>3</sup> *Syst. der christlichen Lehre*, p. 144.

chiefly by the path of negation, denying in God those limitations in degree of existence which we find in all other beings. Hence we ascribe to Him 1. *Infinitude of Being*, meaning thereby not the *perfection* of His attributes, which is another consideration, but the *boundlessness* and *fulness* of His essence. Though there are other beings in existence besides Him, and though these are like Him in intelligence and powers, their being imposes no limit or qualification or restraint whatever on His. He remains still the great and terrible God, the alone God, to whom dignity and majesty alone belong, whose greatness is unfathomable, and whose understanding is infinite. In Him all Fulness dwells. 2. *Incomprehensibility*; by which is intended not merely that no being has understood or comprehended God, but that no being ever can do so, save God Himself; comp. Job xi. 7; Ps. cxlv. 3; Rom. xi. 33; 1 Tim. vi. 16, etc. 3. *Majesty and glory, unlimited*. He dwells in light which is inaccessible and full of glory. The Lord is clothed with majesty. Honour and majesty are before Him. He is "the only wise God, to whom belong glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

Such are the Natural Attributes of God properly and strictly so called—the Attributes which He manifests simply as existing. To these some add under this head Omniscience and Omnipotence; but for these a more appropriate place will be found under the head of the Mental and Ethical Perfections of God, to which we shall proceed in next Lecture.

Dr. Samuel Clarke, whose work on the *Being and Attributes of God* is one of the great books in English theology, speaking of the manner in which these attributes of God are to be thought by us, says, "'Tis evident that the self-existent Being must be Infinite in the strictest and most complete sense. But as to the *particular manner* of His being infinite or everywhere present in opposition to the manner of created things being present in such or such finite places: this is as impossible for our finite understandings to comprehend or explain as it is for us to form an adequate idea of Infinity. Yet that the thing is true, that He actually is omnipresent, we are as certain as we are that there must something be infinite; which no man, who has



thought upon these things at all, ever denied. The schoolmen, indeed, have presumed to assert that the immensity of God is a *point*, as His Eternity (they think) is an *instant*. But this being altogether unintelligible, that which we can more safely affirm, and which no Atheist can say is absurd, and which nevertheless is sufficient to all wise and good purposes is this, that whereas all Finite and Created Beings can be present but in one definite place at once, and corporeal beings even in that one place very imperfectly and unequally, to any purpose of power or activity, only by the successive motion of different members and organs ; the Supreme Cause, on the contrary, being an infinite and most simple essence, and comprehending all things perfectly in Himself, *is at all times* equally present, both in His simple essence and by the immediate and perfect exercise of all His attributes, to every point of the boundless immensity, as if it were really all but one single point.”<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER IV.

### GOD.

#### II. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—*continued*.

##### ii. *Moral Perfections of God.*

Having, according to the scheme proposed, considered the natural, ontological, or metaphysical perfections of God, I now proceed to the consideration of His *Moral Perfections*—using the term “moral” not as synonymous with *ethical*, but as opposed to physical or simply natural, and as including the *mental* as well as the *ethical* perfections of God. And here, pursuing the analogy of the human nature to the divine, we shall consider the attributes of God under the twofold division of *Intelligence* and *Will*.

(i.) *The Divine Intelligence*.—The intelligence of God is His own self-consciousness, if we may use such an expres-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 43, 44.

sion ; or, as one of the older divines describes it, it is that “by which God most perfectly knows not only Himself, but all besides, whatever it may be, in one eternal and most simple act ; not,” he adds, “a quality or cognition distinct from the intelligent faculty itself, but the divine essence itself by which as cognoscent it is apprehended.”<sup>1</sup>

In Scripture the intelligence of God is spoken of as His “knowledge,” חָכְמָה, *γνώσις* ; His “understanding,” בִּינָה or חִבּוּנָה, *σύνεσις*, *ἐπιστήμη* ; His “wisdom,” חָכְמָה, *σοφία*, *φρόνησις*. The verbs חָכַם, *εἰδέναι*, יָדַע, *γινώσκειν*, חָקַר, *ἐρευνᾶν*, are also used of God.

The intelligence of God, though formally distinguishable from His essence, is essentially identical with it. It is formally distinguishable inasmuch as His essence is immanent and absolutely necessary, whilst His intelligence is transient in so far as it passes to things without, and is not necessary in so far as it has to do with what is contingent and the object of free will. Essentially, however, it is identical with His Being ; for were His intelligence really distinct from His essence, it would be something added to Him from without, something accidental to Him, something which might be separated from Him, which would be incompatible with His simplicity, and, moreover, His being and His intelligence would thus be made finite, which is incompatible with His infinitude. “God knows the world from eternity, but He knows it not necessarily as and because it is not a necessary existence ; He knows from eternity all free actions of intelligent creatures, yet He knows them not of necessity because and in so far as they are not necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

The divine Intelligence may be considered—

1. As to its object or in respect of its compass. Here God’s attribute is *Omniscience*. His knowledge is absolutely perfect ; by one simple and eternal act of intelligence He knows all things that are, that have been, that will be, or that by any possibility can be. The compass of His knowledge is infinite. It embraces all things, great and small, hidden and manifest, present and future, necessary and contingent, everything, without exception, in the whole range of existence. God knows Himself—His essence, His per-

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *System*, ii. p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Klee, *Dogmatik*, ii. 56.

fections, and all His designs and acts. The Infinite can alone know the infinite; and the knowledge of the infinite can alone engage and occupy the infinite mind. And God, knowing Himself, must know all things; for in Him, the Infinite, all things "live and move and have their being."

The multiplicity of the objects of the divine intelligence does not impair its unity, and its unity alters not the multiplicity and unity of the objects. God knows things as they are; the past as past, the future as future, the free as free. As Eternal He is present to all times, so that every time, with all that is therein, is to Him knowable and known. He foresees all that is contingent as well as all that is necessary, — the thoughts, purposes, and actions of His intelligent creatures, as well as the successive phenomena of the physical universe. Nor does this foreknowledge of His intelligent creatures alter or suspend their freedom; for the foreknowledge is not the cause of their thoughts and actions, but these, in that they happen, are the ground of the foreknowledge. As Jerome says, "That something shall be does not arise from God's knowing it, but because it shall be God, prescient of things to be, knows it." All that God foresees shall certainly happen, but not because He foresees it; it comes to pass ever according to its own nature, the necessary as necessary, the contingent as contingent, the free as free. "My power," says Augustine, "is not taken away by His prescience, nor is it more certainly with me because He, whose prescience fails not, has foreseen that it shall be with me." Within certain limits we can foresee the actions of our fellow-men, and even predict results; we can, from what we know of a man's general character, temperament, and tendencies, form a highly probable, almost certain, conclusion as to how he will comport himself in any given circumstances, and we can predict that a certain issue will be the result of a given condition to any man; but no one would for a moment suppose that this prescience on our part interfered in any way with the man's freedom, or in any way necessitated the issue contemplated. Why, then, should it be imagined that God's foreknowledge of men's purposes and actions should interfere with man's freedom? "Why do you demand," asks Boethius, "that those things which are seen by the divine eye should

come to pass of necessity when men do not make to be necessary those things which they see? For of the things which you see to be present, does your seeing them add any necessity to them? By no means. But if one may compare the divine present with the human present, as you see certain things in this your temporary present, so He sees all things in His eternal present. Wherefore this divine foreknowledge changes not the nature and propriety of things. [God] beholds as present with Him things such as they shall come to pass in time in the future; nor does He confound the judgments of things; and by a single intuition He discerns as well what are to come to pass necessarily as what are to come not necessarily."<sup>1</sup>

"Not after our manner," says Augustine, "does God either foresee what is future or look at what is present, or look even on what is past, but in a manner far and widely diverse from the custom of our thoughts. For He does not see by a change of thoughts from this to that, but altogether incommutably, not of things that happen in time so that the future are not yet, the present are now, the past are not now; but He comprehends all these in a stable and sempiternal present; nor does He see in one way with the eyes, in another with the mind; for He is not composed of soul and body; nor in one way now, in another formerly, in another afterwards; since His knowledge does not change by a variety of three times, to wit, present, past, and future, as does ours; with Him there is no mutation nor the shadow of change. Nor does His attention pass from thought to thought, but in His incorporeal vision all things He knows are present at once."<sup>2</sup>

In a similar strain writes the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas: "It is wrong to say that human acts and events are not under the divine prescience and ordination. Nor is it less wrong to say that the divine

<sup>1</sup> *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, lib. v. 6. Boethius was a Roman Senator and a high officer of State in the reign of the Emperor Theodoric. He fell a victim to the jealousy of this semi-barbarous prince, and was put to death in A.D. 524. It was while waiting in prison the execution of the sentence which had been pronounced against him that he composed the work from which I have quoted. "A golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully," Gibbon.

<sup>2</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xi. c. 21.

prescience and ordination render necessary human actions. By this liberty of choice, opportunity of conciliating, utility of laws, care to do well, the justice of rewards and punishments would be taken away. It is, therefore, to be considered that God has knowledge of things otherwise than man has. For man is subject to time, and therefore knows things temporally, regarding some things as present, recalling some as past, and foreseeing some as future. But God is superior to the course of time, and His being is eternal; whence also His knowledge is not temporal but eternal. Now the comparison of the eternal with the temporal is that of the indivisible with the continuous. For in time there is found a certain diversity of parts succeeding, as prior and posterior, as in a line there are found different parts arranged one after the other. But eternity has neither prior nor posterior, for with eternal things there is no change. And so eternity is wholly simultaneous, just as a point is without parts locally distinct."<sup>1</sup>

(1.) The divine omniscience is frequently asserted in Scripture. *a.* In the general: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13; comp. also 1 John iii. 20; Dan. ii. 22; Acts xv. 18; Prov. xv. 3; Job xxviii. 10; Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5, etc.). *b.* All the conditions of His creatures (Ps. cxxxix.; Matt. vi. 8, 32, x. 30, etc.). *c.* All the thoughts and actions of men: "The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth" (Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14); "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3; comp. also Isa. xxix. 15, 16; Jer. xvi. 17, xvii. 10; Matt. vi. 4, 6, vi. 8; Luke xvi. 15; Acts i. 24; 1 Cor. iv. 5, etc.). *d.* All things future as well as things present and past to us: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. xlvi. 9, 10; comp. also Isa. xlii. 8, 9, xliii. 9, xliv. 6 ff.; Jer. i. 5; Gal.

<sup>1</sup> *Advers. Græcos*, etc., c. 10.

i. 15, etc.). God's knowledge is thus unbounded: "His understanding is infinite" (Ps. cxlvii. 5); "there is no searching of His understanding" (Isa. xl. 28); His judgments are "unsearchable, and His ways past finding out" (Rom. xi. 33).

(2.) This attribute of God we can contemplate only in the way of negation; we can simply think and affirm that there is nothing which God does not see and know. We may indeed, in some small measure, attain to a thought of God's knowledge by the way of eminence; we may realize to our minds the knowledge of a man like Aristotle or Bacon, or the knowledge of the ruler of a vast empire, with the condition of which, and the circumstances, wants, and wishes of its inhabitants, he is familiar; and we may think this as indefinitely increased, and try to grasp the conception of One to whom everything is known. But we shall find that it is only a little way that we can go in this course, and that when we have done our utmost, the only thing of which we are quite sure is, that what we have been seeking to know passeth knowledge. To acquire a positive and adequate conception of Omniscience, we should require to be ourselves omniscient. When, however, we contemplate God as the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, we feel constrained to ascribe to Him this attribute. He by whom all things have been made must know His own works. He by whom all things are upheld and regulated cannot be destitute of that unerring insight and universal knowledge without which mistakes might be committed that would plunge the whole in irreparable confusion. And He who is to judge His accountable creatures, not merely by their actions but by their words and most secret thoughts, must possess that intimate acquaintance with all that is in them as well as all that proceeds from them, without which such judgment is impossible. He who predicts future events also must be omniscient; and in the prophecies of Scripture we have thus an illustration brought nigh to us of God's boundless knowledge; as Tertullian says, "*Præscientia Dei tot habet testes quot facit prophetas.*"

(3.) This divine omniscience is from eternity. God's knowledge is not amassed, not accumulated by experience, not increased by continued accessions. His intelligence admits of

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Marc.*, ii.

no expansion; it can suffer no diminution. He foresees what is to happen in time from "before the foundation of the world." His purposes are formed "before the world began." No adviser hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; none as His counsellor hath taught Him, or showed Him the way of understanding. He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.

(4.) This knowledge is as precise and minute as it is vast and all-embracing. "O Lord," exclaims the Psalmist, "Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand on me" (Ps. cxxxix. 1-5). "He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven." "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him" (2 Chron. xvi. 9). Hence all that God declares is absolutely without mistake or defect—absolutely true and right. The Omniscient cannot err or fail.

(5.) The divine knowledge, as respects its compass, has been distinguished by the scholastic divines as—

*a. Scientia necessaria.* By one simple and eternal act of intelligence God knows Himself, and in Himself the necessity of all existing things. The necessity here affirmed is opposed not to freedom, but to arbitrariness and uncertainty. The knowledge is not empirical, but antecedent and essential.

*b. Scientia libera, or Sc. visionis.* By this is intended the knowledge whereby God truly knows all really existing things beside Himself. This knowledge has respect to things dependent on the divine will, and which appear to us accidental, but are not really so. It is called "*scientia visionis*," because by it God knows actual existence by beholding it, as it were, face to face. Some go so far as to subdivide this knowledge into knowledge of reminiscence, knowledge of vision, and knowledge of prescience; but this is too anthropomorphic, and overlooks the fact that with God there is neither past nor future.

*c. Scientia media*, called also *Sc. hypothetica*, *Sc. de futuro conditionato* — the knowledge of what may take place, certain conditions being given, but does not actually take place; or the knowledge of things not actually existing, but which may be, provided certain conditions are fulfilled. The term “media” is applied to this, because the possible, which is its object, stands, as it were, between the necessary and the actual. The name originated with Peter Fonseca, a Jesuit; but the chief expositor of the doctrine is Louis Molina, a divine of the same school, from whom it is often called the Molinist doctrine.<sup>1</sup> It was not unknown, however, to earlier divines. Gregory of Nyssa, referring to the death of an infant, says, “It is likely that He who knows that which is future no less than that which is past, arrested the progress of the infant's life, lest the evil which was perceived by force of prescience should have become actual in him had he lived.” Augustine also seems to have had this in his mind when he wrote, “It is false to say that the dead are judged according to those things which they would have done had the gospel come to them when alive; and if this is false, it is not to be affirmed that infants who perish, dying without baptism, deservedly so perish because God foresaw that if they had lived, and the gospel had been preached to them, they would not have believed it.”<sup>2</sup> Sir W. Hamilton has a note on this subject in his edition of *Reid's Works*, p. 632, where he very clearly states the distinction between the three objects of the divine knowledge, and adduces as an example of the *scientia media* the case of “David consulting the Lord whether the men of Keilah would deliver him to Saul if Saul came down against the city. The answer was that they would so deliver him; upon which David, who had intended retiring into Keilah, adopted other plans” (comp. also Jer. xxxviii. 17–20, and Ezek. iii. 6). It may be doubted, however, whether there is any real ground for this distinction. Such expressions as those of David in the case adduced, and in the other passages referred to, are mere popular representations on which it would be unwise to found

<sup>1</sup> *De Concordia Providentiæ et Gratiæ divinæ cum libero arbitrio hominis*, Lissabon 1588.

<sup>2</sup> *De Bono Perseverantiæ*, c. 9.



a scientific distinction. With God there is really no "if;" and as the assumption of the hypothetical possible is, in fact, a confession of ignorance on our part, an acknowledgment that we know not whether the possible shall become the actual, it is surely unwarrantable to ascribe anything of this to God. God knows beforehand the free as free; and however impossible it may be for us to construe this to our minds, we must beware of attributing to God what is only something incident to our finite nature.

2. In respect of *mode* the divine intelligence may be described as (1) *Most true*: God has a perfect, exact, and entire knowledge of all things. (2) *Most certain and distinct*: His knowledge is special, and embraces the minutest particulars. (3) *Intuitive, immediate, pure*: not by sensible perception nor through means of the discursive reason, as with men. He knows things not as phenomenal, but in their inner essence, as they are in themselves by an immediate intuition. (4) *Simultaneous*: as opposed to successive, gradual, gathered from experience—a knowledge of the universal all, at once and for ever.

The omniscience of the Deity was acknowledged even by the heathen: *εἰδότες μὲν τοὺς Θεοὺς καλούμεθα* is the exclamation of Electra in the *Choephoroi* of Aeschylus (l. 192); Sophocles makes one of his characters invoke Apollo as one who, *δαίμων ὦν*, knew what she needed even though she did not ask it, for it is meet that those sprung from Zeus should see all things.<sup>1</sup> Pindar says, "If a man do anything and hopes to conceal it from God, he errs;" and, not to multiply quotations, we have Xenophon declaring by one of the interlocutors in the *Convivium* that "it is evident, as both Greeks and Barbarians reckon, that the gods know all things, both that are and that will be;" and he makes the same speaker express his confidence that the gods, being all-knowing as well as all-potent, were so his friends that, for the sake of taking care of him, he was at no time hidden from them neither by night nor by day, nor wherever he went, nor whatever he did;<sup>2</sup> all which Socrates declared to be perfectly credible.

3. The divine intelligence may be considered with respect to its *efficiency*. In this respect the intelligence of God is commonly called His *wisdom* (*חכמה, σοφία* or *φρόνησις*), that

<sup>1</sup> *Electra*, l. 655-659.

<sup>2</sup> *Sympos.* c. iv. § 47 ff.

attribute by which He ever adopts with unerring skill means to an end, so as to effect His own purposes, and so as to secure the highest good to His creatures. "We distinguish," says Kant, "theoretic wisdom from practical. The former has to do with the true, the perfect, the good, the blessed; the latter with the best means of securing the best ends." It is in this latter sense that it is predicated of God; the former has reference rather to His knowledge as such. His work is perfect—perfect in its end, which is ever the best, and perfect in its means, which are ever those most adapted to secure the end.

The highest end is God Himself; the manifestation of His perfection, the display of His glory, is the grand end of all His works; and the best means are those which are at once the most simple and the most effective.

Scripture represents God as not only wise, but as the alone wise.<sup>1</sup> With Him are wisdom and strength; He is the only wise God. His wisdom is seen (1) By His works in creation: "O Lord," exclaims the Psalmist, "how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps. civ. 24); (2) By His providence, Dan. ii. 20 ff.; comp. also Job xii. 13 ff.; (3) In the plan of redemption: this is emphatically "the wisdom of God," "the wisdom of God in a mystery," even that mystery "which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. xvi. 25 ff.); Christ "is the wisdom of God and the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 24); "in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3); and through them is "to God the only wise glory for ever" (Rom. xvi. 27); (4) In the salvation of men and in the training of the saved for the heavenly blessedness: in this God hath abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence; and to the angels, who desire to look into the things connected with the development of the divine life in believers through the divine training, there is made known by the Church "the manifold wisdom of God" (1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 10).

<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras declared *μηδὲνα εἶναι σοφὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ἢ Θεόν*. For himself he took the title not of *σοφός*, but of *φιλόσοφος*. Diog. Laert., *Proem.* c. 8.

The wisdom of God is declared in Scripture to be deep and unsearchable, Rom. xi. 33 ; Isa. xl. 28. It is wholly His own ; "Who," asks the prophet, "hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him ? with whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him and taught Him the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding ?" (Isa. xl. 13). But what is thus in itself hidden in God and by man past finding out, God has been pleased to make known to us, especially in His word. What was but partially revealed to the men of the ancient dispensations, has in these later times been fully made known to us by the revelation of Christ. The unfolded mystery of the gospel is the crowning apocalypse of the wisdom of God. To the carnal mind, indeed, this seems folly ; just as to one whose eyes are weak a blaze of light has the effect of darkness ; but the foolishness of God, as men deem it, is wiser than men ; and to those who have spiritual discernment the light thus falling on them is sweet, and they behold with delight the sun of righteousness, whose radiance at once illustrates the divine glory and sheds illumination on the path of man.

(ii.) We come now to consider those attributes of God which belong to the *Divine Will*.

The will of God is that by which God is the supreme cause of being. It is the divine intelligence conceived as determining and acting. The will of God is God Himself willing ; it is His desiring and tending towards good, known by His intelligence, and His turning away from evil, known also by His intelligence ; it is the supreme faculty of acting and following out the knowledge of the highest good. It must ever be viewed as connected with the most perfect intelligence.

Scripture signalizes *will* as belonging to God. The expressions used are *βουλή τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *θέλημα τ. Θ.*, *βουλή τοῦ θελήματος*, *εὐδοκία τ. θελ.*, *ἰθέη*, etc. It is not always, however, in exactly the same sense that the will of God is referred to in Scripture. Sometimes it means His secretory will or purpose, as in Eph. i. 11 : "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will ;" sometimes it means God's desire or wish or pleasure, as in Matt.

xviii. 14: "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish;" and sometimes it means what God approves and enjoins on His intelligent creatures, as in Eph. vi. 6: "doing the will of God from the heart;" 1 Pet. iv. 2: "That he should no longer live . . . to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." The divine purposes are from eternity and are immutable, and His will in this sense *must* be accomplished: "Who hath saved us," says the apostle, "and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. i. 9); "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Ps. xxxiii. 11), etc. What God has pleasure in and desires, He has not always decreed shall come to pass, or He has decreed it shall come to pass under certain conditions which may or may not be fulfilled; and therefore what He desires, may not always be attained: thus though God delights not in the death of him that dieth, but will have all men to be saved, yet as He has not decreed that none shall perish, and has made salvation conditional on man's pursuing a certain course, all are not saved, multitudes perish. So also the preceptive will of God may not be done by men, who as free agents may or may not follow that path which God has commended and prescribed to them.

"The chief attribute of will," says Quenstedt, "is liberty. The liberty of the divine will, however, has relation to things *ad extra*; for all things extraneous to Himself God wills freely, so that He could also not-will them. Liberty pertains therefore to the will of God not *simpliciter*, but in respect of its being directed to other things extraneous to Him. The will of God concerning Himself is essential to God and simply necessary; by it God wills His own perfections wholly of necessity not freely, so that He cannot not-will or will this way or that way; which does not derogate from the divine Omnipotence or blessedness, but argues the perfection and immutability of God." God must ever will and act in accordance with His own nature. There is a necessity of the divine nature which determines all the purposes and doings of the Almighty; and hence it is that His way is ever

perfect, His purposes ever right, His testimony ever sure, and His judgments true and righteous altogether. But in relation to all that is extraneous to Himself, God's will is absolutely and perfectly free. There is, however, nothing of arbitrariness in this; God wills only as the highest reason dictates. "Liberty," says Leibnitz, "consists in *intelligence*, which involves a distinct knowledge of the object of deliberation; in *spontaneity*, with which we determine ourselves; and in *contingence*, that is to say, in the exclusion of logical or metaphysical necessity. Intelligence is as the soul of liberty, the rest as its body and basis. The free substance determines itself by itself, and that according to the motive of the good perceived by the understanding which inclines it without necessity; in these few words are comprised all the conditions of liberty."<sup>1</sup> And in another treatise he says, "To the nature of will freedom is required, which consists in this, that voluntary action be free and deliberate, and so as to include necessity, which takes away deliberation. Metaphysical necessity," he continues, "is excluded, the opposite of which is the impossible, or which implies a contradiction; but not moral, the opposite of which is the unbefitting. For God cannot err in choosing, and so He ever chooses what is most befitting; but this in no wise hinders His freedom; on the contrary, it rather renders it the more perfect."<sup>2</sup> Thus "the most complete liberty is a moral necessity to do what is good, a condition in which it is further morally impossible to will and do what is evil. Such moral or free necessity is only in God, whose will must ever choose the good which the most perfect intelligence perceives (*voluntas unice ad bonum determinata*). And this is the Holiness of God, that attribute in virtue of which His will ever exactly accords with the most perfect intelligence, or the harmony of His willing and working with His essential perfection;"<sup>3</sup>—"Consensus voluntatis liberrimæ perfectissimus cum legibus intellectus sapientissimi."<sup>4</sup>

This Liberty of God has been distinguished by theologians into *Libertas contradictionis*, by which He decrees whether anything shall be or shall not be; and *Libertas contrarietatis*,

<sup>1</sup> *Theodicæ*, p. 3, § 238.

<sup>2</sup> *Causa Dei Asserta*, etc., § 20,

<sup>3</sup> Bretschneider, *Handbuch*, i. 341.

<sup>4</sup> Ammon, *Summa*, p. 133.

by which He decrees whether anything shall be thus or otherwise.

In ascribing to God perfect liberty two things are implied; the one, that no extraneous power can hinder Him from accomplishing His own determinations; and the other, that no limitation or affection can constrain Him to will or to do aught else than what He knows to be good; neither error can mislead Him nor the force of temptation draw Him from what He knows to be good and right. Thus to the Will of God we ascribe Omnipotence and Moral Perfection.

1. In ascribing to God *Omnipotence* it is meant that He has but to will to accomplish; in the language of Scripture, "He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 9); "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. iv. 35). God acts according to will and purpose; He does not act by blind necessity, or by mechanical impulse, or by unreasoning passion; He wills to act, wills according to the highest reason, and what He wills to do is thereby done. As, on the one hand, nothing can hinder Him from doing what He wills; so, on the other, He ever can and does accomplish all that He wills. With Him all things are possible (Matt. xix. 26). "He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. vi. 15). "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places" (Ps. cxxxv. 6). Whatever He hath promised He is able to perform (Rom. iv. 21). Hence Scripture speaks of Him as *בָּרִיךְ*, Strong; *אֲמִיר*, Mighty; *אֲדִיר*, Potent; *אֲמִיץ*, Strong; *παντοκράτωρ*, Almighty; and ascribes to Him strength (*בָּזָז*, *δύναμις*) and might (*נְבִיחָה*, *ἐνέργεια*).

The Divine Omnipotence is inseparable from His being. As the absolute essence, He is the absolutely potent. Potency corresponds to essence; the absolute essence is consequently absolute potency. His omnipotence stands associated also with His omniscience; infinite knowledge is infinite power; "apud quem summa potestas est summa et secreta cognitio est."<sup>1</sup>

As the will of God is not separable from His intelligence, He can never will what is untrue, what is contradictory, what is contrary to Himself; and as He ever wills what is right

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *In Ps.* xlix.

and good, He cannot do what is evil; He cannot be unrighteous, He cannot lie, He cannot deny Himself. There is in this no limitation of the divine almightiness, any more than there is in saying He cannot die. The very opposite is the case. God could die only if some power outside of Him could prevail over Him, and in this case His omnipotence would be limited; and in like manner He could will or do evil only if some intrinsic influence could prevail so as to constrain Him counter to His own nature, and in this case also there would be a limitation of His omnipotence. As one of the ancient Fathers puts it, "The not being able to do any of these is the mark of boundless power, not of weakness; and, on the other hand, the being able [to do them] a mark of infirmity, not of power."<sup>1</sup> "God," says Augustine, "is rightly said to be omnipotent, and yet He cannot die, He cannot be deceived. For He is called omnipotent, in that He does what He wills, and suffers not what He wills not. If the latter could happen to Him, He would cease to be omnipotent. Hence it is just because He is omnipotent there are some things He cannot do."<sup>2</sup> "To God," says Tertullian, "nothing is impossible, save what He wills not."<sup>3</sup>

The power of God being infinite, it follows that nothing which He has made or done is so great or excellent that it cannot be transcended by something still greater or more excellent proceeding from Him. No bounds can be set to the manifestation of His power. What God at any time does is never the measure of His power to do.

The divine omnipotence is not limited by liberty in the creature; on the contrary, its highest manifestation lies in this, that a sphere of creature liberty consists under it and through it.

2. The absolute freedom of the divine will implies not merely the absence of all extraneous power by which the divine purposes might be hindered or frustrated; it implies also perfect moral freedom, the absence of everything that could move to aught inconsistent with the moral perfection of the divine nature. Hence to God is ascribed *Holiness*, by which is intended not merely moral purity, but the consummate excellence of God, that attribute by which God, subject

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, *Eran.*, Dial. iii.

<sup>2</sup> *De Civit. Dei*, lib. v. c. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *De Carne Christi*, c. iii.



to no constraint, ever chooses and decrees and does what is accordant with the highest perfection, the harmony of His will with all that is true, and right, and good, and pure. This is the will of God; and hence the heavenly hosts are represented as saying, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come" (Rev. iv. 8). God is emphatically the Holy One (ἅγιος, Lev. xi. 44; Isa. xl. 25; Hos. xi. 9; ὁ ἅγιος, 1 John ii. 20). Under this is included—

(1.) *Moral Purity.* God is called in Scripture ἁγνός, τέλειος, ὁσιος, and is said to be ἀπείραστος κακῶν.

a. Ἁγνός properly means *clean*, and originally was used in a non-ethical sense as opposed to ῥυπαρός; but both in the classical writings and in the N. T. it is used of moral purity, and that in the highest sense. In a line of Euripides it appears both with a physical and an ethical reference, ἁγνὸς γάρ εἰμι χεῖρας, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰς φρένας.<sup>1</sup> In the classics it is often applied as an epithet to the deities of the heathen; to Apollo, as the sun-god, because of the purity of light;<sup>2</sup> to Minerva, because of her virgin purity; to Ceres and Proserpine, to the Muses, and to Zeus himself.<sup>3</sup> In the LXX. it is used in a few instances with a moral sense, as in Ps. xi. [xii.] 7, where it is applied to the divine oracles (λόγια) as pure from all admixture of error or untruth; and in Prov. xv. 26, where it is used of persons pure in heart. In the N. T. it is applied to God (1 John iii. 3), as expressive of perfect moral purity. It predicates of Him that of the evil that is in the universe, the iniquity, impurity, and moral defect that exist outside of Him, He is wholly free; it does not touch Him; it exerts no influence on Him essentially; He is entirely above and beyond its reach. Closely allied to this is the phrase, ἀπείραστος κακῶν, as used of God (Jas. i. 13). God has, and can have, no experience of evil.

b. τέλειος. This word has primarily a reference to τέλος, and designates one who has reached his proper end; hence one who is perfect and complete. In this sense it is applied in the N. T. to a work, ἔργον τέλειον (Jas. i. 4),—a work to which nothing needs to be added, which is perfect and complete, and to the perfect knowledge which is to be attained in the future

<sup>1</sup> *Orest.*, 1604.

<sup>2</sup> Pindar, *Pythia*, ix. 112.

<sup>3</sup> Soph. *Elec.*, 86, ὦ φάος ἁγνόν.



state as contrasted with that which we have here, and which is only ἐκ μέρους. It is also applied in an ethical sense to charity (1 John iv. 18), and to men who are morally cleansed, and so in a measure have reached the end of their regenerated being (Eph. iv. 13; Phil. iii. 15, etc.); to the divine law (Jas. i. 25; Heb. ix. 11, etc.). It is used of God by our Lord when He said, "Be ye perfect (τέλειοι), as your Father in heaven is perfect (τέλειος)" (Matt. v. 48), where the followers of Christ are exhorted to seek that entire completeness of moral character and excellence, according to the measure of their finite nature, which in the infinite divine nature exists without measure. In classical Greek it is frequently found as an epithet of the supreme deities of the heathen, especially Zeus and Hera.<sup>1</sup>

c. ὅσιος. This properly means godly, and as used by men it primarily indicates piety.<sup>2</sup> It is so used in classical Greek, as, *e.g.*,<sup>3</sup> "Being a pious observer of his country's rites, he died without reproach, as it is becoming for the young to die." It is also used of a place dedicated to pious uses; hence sacred, holy. As used of God, it indicates that He ever is, and acts in accordance with His own perfect nature; that He is ever at one with Himself, and in accordance with that law which is the expression of His mind. This epithet is used of God in Rev. xv. 4 and xvi. 5. "The word ὅσιος," says Hengstenberg, "when used of man, denotes a tender, solemn regard towards God and the relations appointed by Him; when used of God, it denotes regard to His own character, and government of the world as grounded thereon."<sup>4</sup> To these may be added the appellation φῶς as used of God. "This," says St. John, "is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light (φῶς), and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). By this is indicated, not so much the divine intelligence as the divine moral purity, God's absolute stainlessness, as well as the brightness, the lustre, the glory of His being as manifested to us. He

<sup>1</sup> See Pindar, *Pyth.* i. 67; Aesch., *Agam.*, 973; Plut., *Moralia*, p. 264 B. etc.

<sup>2</sup> As the Scholiast on Eurip. *Hecub.* 788, explains it: τὰ πρὸς θεοῦς ἔξ ἀνθρώπων γινόμενοι δίκαιοι ὅσιοι καλοῦμεν.

<sup>3</sup> Aeschylus, *Sept. c. Th.*, 1010.

<sup>4</sup> *Comment. on the Apocalypse*, ii. 147, Eng. Tr.

not only has light and dwells in light, He is light; the pure light is His essence; no shade of darkness can be in Him.

(2.) *Absolute truthfulness and faithfulness.* This is the quality whereby God, who cannot lie or deceive, ever wills the performance and realization to His creatures of whatever He has either explicitly promised, or by implication certified in the order and constitution of the world. This is the *veracitas moralis Dei* as distinct from His *veracitas essentialis*, by which is affirmed the actual being of God as the *ens perfectissimum*. This attribute is called indifferently the truthfulness of God, His faithfulness, His infallibility, the oneness of His will, and has reference to His perfect constancy in uttering what is true, in keeping His promises, and in fulfilling His threatenings. Comp. Num. xxiii. 19; Ps. xxxi. 5, 6, xxxiii. 11; Rom. iii. 3 ff., xi. 29; 1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 13, etc. On this attribute of God all certainty rests. Our belief in objective truth, our assurance of the constancy of natural law, our confidence in revelation, are alike guaranteed by it. God has established His faithfulness in the heavens, and it is praised in the congregation of the saints. All His words are true and faithful.

Closely connected with divine faithfulness is the divine immutability, for it is because He changeth not that His word standeth sure; and He changeth not, because all His counsels, decrees, statutes, and promises are founded on truth. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart unto all generations. For ever is His word settled in the heavens; His faithfulness is unto all generations.

(3.) *Benignity and goodness*, or benevolence, *i.e.* God's goodness in relation to His creatures, that by which He ever wills their highest good. This is often in Scripture designated the Love of God; and this love is represented as finding its highest manifestation in creation, in providence, and in redemption; cf. Ps. viii., civ. 10 ff.; John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8; 1 John iv. 16, etc.

To the goodness of God all creation bears witness. How manifold and how marvellous are the adaptations of external nature to the wants and enjoyment of sentient and intelligent beings! Not only is provision made for the sustenance and well-being of the various tribes of animals, not only is it so

arranged that what is necessary for their sustenance is also conducive to their enjoyment, but we cannot look around us without perceiving that there are innumerable provisions which seem to have no other purpose than that of ministering to the pleasure and enjoyment of the animal creation. The goodness of God, "limited in its extent only by the limits of the universe itself, is present with us wherever we turn our eyes, since there is not a result of the wisdom and the power of God which is not in its consequences, direct or indirect, an exhibition of some contrivance for the moral or physical advantage of His creatures."<sup>1</sup> Nor is the goodness of God less apparent in the field of providence and the phenomena of event than in the field of creation and the phenomena of physical fact. The history of our race, nay, the daily experience of households and individuals, furnishes constant evidence of the goodness of Him who holds all things in His hand, and orders all events according to His own will. The earth is indeed full of the goodness of the Lord. He crowneth the year with His goodness. The goodness of God endureth continually.

It is in the work of redemption, however, that the goodness of God is most conspicuously displayed. Here His benignity is specially signalized in Scripture as His love and His grace (John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Rom. v. 8; Eph. ii. 4). This love of God is described also as His *ἔλεος*, pity or compassion (Jude 21; 1 Pet. i. 3; Rom. xi. 31), and as His *χρηστότης*, His kindness or gentleness (Rom. ii. 4; Eph. ii. 7); and this is coupled with His *ἀνοχή καὶ μακροθυμία*, His patience and longsuffering (Rom. ii. 4), and with His *φιλανθρωπία* (Tit. iii. 4). St. James also speaks of God as *πολύσπλαγχνος καὶ οἰκτίρμων* (v. 11), very merciful (or affectionate) and pitiful.

God's love finds its adequate object only in Himself, but it flows over upon His creatures. The scholastic divines have set forth three degrees of this love of God to His creatures:—*a. Amor universalis* or *generalis*, God's benevolence or benignity towards all creation; *b. Amor specialis*, His love towards intelligent beings; and *c. Amor specialissimus*, His love to holy beings, both those unfallen and those redeemed by Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Brown, *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, etc., vol. iv.

(4.) *Justice*,  $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ . This in Scripture is often tantamount to the divine holiness, the absolute perfection of God, the consummate and immutable rectitude of God. He is the righteous Lord who loveth righteousness; He is righteous in all His ways; His righteousness endureth for ever. In relation to His creatures, the righteousness of God is that by which He wills and does all that is conformed to rectitude, all that is befitting and proper, all that is in accordance with that law which He has promulgated, and which is the expression of His perfect nature. This righteousness manifests itself primarily as *Justitia antecedens, legislatoria* or *dispositiva*, according to which God has determined the ethical relations and duties of His intelligent creatures, whether by a formal law given orally or in writing, or by the natural law written on men's hearts, the law of conscience; and secondarily, as *Justitia consequens, distributiva* or *judicialis*, which has reference to the award of God as judge to His creatures for their actions, whether remunerative or punitive. In reference, however, to the remunerative righteousness of God, all right or desert of man is denied; God crowns man with His gifts, or rewards him, of pure grace. The good works of the righteous are rewarded by their reaping the fruits of their deeds.

The Biblical concept of righteousness is not exhausted by the idea of justice as commonly understood. We find it associated with goodness (Ps. cxlv. 7), with mercy (Ps. ciii. 17), with loving-kindness (Jer. ix. 24; Hos. ii. 19), with salvation (Ps. xcviii. 2, cxix. 123; Isa. xlvi. 13). In the N. T. the appointment of Jesus Christ to be a propitiation by His blood through faith is said to be a manifestation of the righteousness of God in the forgiveness of sins (Rom. iii. 25, 26); and it is further said that if we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us our sins (1 John ii. 9). The righteousness of God, therefore, is to be understood in a much wider sense than mere justice or equity. It is His all-embracing rectitude, His absolute moral perfection, the quality of ever being and ever doing that which it becomes Him to be and to do. Hence the righteousness of God is ever associated with His goodness. God alone is good in the highest sense; He alone out of the fountain of His own good-

will and gracious nature does good to His creatures ; He does good, not as under any law or intrinsic obligation to do good, but because it is His nature to be beneficent ; and so as His righteousness is His perfect conformity to His own essential nature, His goodness and His righteousness coalesce.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER V.

## GOD.

## III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE.

From considering the attributes by which God reveals Himself to us, we now pass on to consider what has been made known to us concerning the peculiar mode of the divine subsistence. By this it is not intended that we should attempt to investigate the nature of the divine essence or the inner qualities of the divine existence. These are matters on which nothing has been revealed to us, and on which we believe it would be impossible in our present state to make anything known to us. All that we propose is to collect and arrange what has been unfolded to us respecting the mode of the divine existence as contrasted with the existences with which we are familiar in the world around us. Here there are two points which come before us ; the one of which is the Unity of the Divine Essence, as contrasted with the specific multiplicity of all creature existence ; the other is the Trinity in the one Godhead, as contrasted with the individual unity of each created mind. Looking at the creature universe we see every species consisting of many individuals ; in contrast to this God is One. Looking at each individual mind of the creature world, we see it to be one concrete subsistence, one indivisible personality ; in contrast to this God exists as Three Persons in the One Godhead.

<sup>1</sup> Ἀγαθὴ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη καὶ δίκαια ἔστιν ἡ ἀγαθότης αὐτοῦ. Clemens Alex., *Strom.*, vi. 14.

i. *The Unity of God.*

(i.) The Unity of God has by some been ranked among the divine attributes; indeed, this is very frequently done in systems of theology. Such a classification, however, is objectionable on two grounds, the first of which is that unity is a mere expression of the relation in which a being stands to number, and does not enter into the idea of his nature or essence as a distinguishing quality of that; and the other is, that as in ascribing to God the qualities which we call His attributes, we simply affirm of Him what would be true whether there were one God or many, in asserting His Unity we assert something quite different from these; we assert that that in which these qualities inhere is one. As Wegscheider has well expressed it, "The Unity of God is rather the foundation which must be supposed to the true idea of Deity."<sup>1</sup>

(ii.) In affirming the Unity of God, we affirm not so much the subjective oneness of the Divine Being as His objective oneness. In our language it is difficult to express this with exactness without coining a word. The Greeks by their distinction between *εἷς* and *μόνος*, and the Latins by theirs between *unus* and *solus*, may supply to us the means of remedying this deficiency; we may coin such a word as *solcity* or *monadity* to convey the idea that we really intend by the ambiguous term *unity*. In this respect the Germans have the advantage of us; they have the word *einheit* to convey the idea of *oneness*, or unity properly so called; and they have the word *einzigkeit* to express the idea of soleness, *i.e.* that the object of which it is affirmed is the only one of its kind. This latter is what we really have to affirm concerning God. He is *solus*, not *unus*; *μόνος Θεός*, as the N. T. expresses it (John v. 44; 1 Tim. i. 17). According to the technical language of the old divines, it is a *unitas numeri*, not a *unitas speciei*, that we are to assert. "Deus non specifica sed numerica unus est," *i.e.* God is not merely one in idea, in our thought, as the idea of a species though it contain many individuals is one; but one in fact, as an object, besides which there is none other of the same kind. When we say God is One, we mean not that there is but

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, p. 228, 6th ed.

one divine species, as we mean there is but one human species when we say man is one, or affirm the unity of the human race; we mean that there is but one sole individual Being who is God, and may be truly so called.

(iii.) Of this fact we do not find that nature furnishes us with any clear and decided proof. All that we see there is unity of plan, the same laws regulating the events of the universe, and the same wise and good ends contemplated throughout; but this is a proof at the best only of a unity of *design*; it cannot prove that there is only one designer. After stating the usual arguments for the unity of God drawn from the uniformity of nature, Paley candidly adds, "Certain, however, it is that the whole argument for the divine unity goes no farther than to a unity of counsel."<sup>1</sup> "The designing," says Dr. Thomas Brown, "is not to our reason more than *one*; since in everything we behold there is unity of that design, from which alone we have any reason to infer a designer." That this is all we can logically infer from the phenomena of the universe would follow even if *all* these phenomena were before us; how much more forcibly does the conclusion press upon us when we consider that it is but a very little part of that universe that is subject to our scrutiny! Even supposing the phenomena around us clearly to attest the divine unity, this consideration alone would preclude our affirming the position absolutely; for though it might be proved that the part of the universe to which we belong, and which is patent to our observation, is the work of only one being, how do we know that it is the same being who has formed and who governs those parts of the universe which lie beyond our reach or ken? If, indeed, it be admitted that the *necessary* existence of God as a self-existent being can be proved by reasoning *a priori*, the unity of His being would follow as a necessary deduction; for there cannot possibly be *two* necessary and self-existing beings. This Mr. Gillespie has shown to demonstration in his work on the *Necessary Existence of God*. But until the validity of this *a priori* method of reasoning on this subject is more generally admitted, it is not desirable to rest on it alone for proof of anything we may wish to establish concerning God.

<sup>1</sup> *Nat. Theol.*, chap. xxv.

But though nature fails to furnish evidence of the divine unity, the appeal to her on this head is not fruitless, for it results in the conviction that there is nothing within the range of our knowledge that is opposed to this belief, nothing that constrains us to suppose a plurality of creators,—nothing that so much as suggests this to us. On the contrary, all that we find in nature falls in with this, and gives a preliminary probability in its favour; for where we find unity of counsel, it is antecedently more probable that this should proceed from one mind than from several. There *may* be many spiritual beings of greater or less power, and these *may* have been united in counsel and operation so as to produce the world, but there is no evidence of this in nature, and therefore, so far as the teachings of nature go, we can neither affirm this nor deny it. But the antecedent probability is that it is not so; and this is something with which to advance to the study of what the Scriptures declare to us on this point. Perhaps we should be justified in going even beyond this, and saying that, as it is incredible that, supposing there are more gods than one, the universe should present no clear traces of this, the strong presumption, the almost certain conclusion, is that there is only one.

(iv.) At the same time, it must be confessed that, however agreeable to enlightened reason, and however consonant with the facts of creation may be the doctrine of the divine unity, it does not appear to be one which, in the absence of revelation, man has been able to retain, or, when lost, to discover anew. That, in the early ages of the world, there was but one religion, and that a religion of Monotheism, is clearly attested by the Mosaic history, and seems to be the conclusion to which a careful analysis of the religious remnants of ancient superstitions conducts the philosophic inquirer. How this doctrine came to be superseded by the Polytheistic and Pantheistic systems of heathenism, it is not necessary for us at present carefully to inquire. Perhaps the most satisfactory hypothesis is that which traces this fact to the operation, under an ungodly influence, of that disposition to *philosophize*, i.e. to trace effects to a cause, which is characteristic of the human mind. In the infancy of science, men satisfy this disposition by ascribing all phenomena to the direct agency of



Deity, who is conceived of, not as having constructed and set in operation the beautiful machinery of the universe, regulating the movements of the whole by great general laws, and interposing by a direct act of His own power only when He sees meet to suspend the ordinary course of things and introduce a new set of phenomena, but as being Himself formally and directly the doer of all things,—the immediate and proximate cause of every event. In a mind thoroughly imbued with right views of the spirituality of the divine essence, and which delights in the contemplation of an infinitely powerful and wise Deity, such a philosophy might produce no effects unfavourable to the belief of the divine unity; but on a mind already debased by gross conceptions of Deity, and to which the idea of an omnipresent, omniscient, and almighty ruler was unspeakably repugnant, the effect could not fail to be very different. In such a case, the intellect would operate under antagonist forces. Superstition would lead men still to refer the phenomena of the material universe to divine power, whilst an ungodly heart would repel the idea of that power being attributed to one great creative and universally superintending Spirit. The consequence could only be the adoption of a sort of medium course, whereby a distinct deity was assigned to each phenomenon or class of phenomena, over which he was supposed to preside, and which he was regarded in every separate instance as directly effecting. Thus, I apprehend, arose that recondite nature-worship which appears to form the basis of all the older mythologies, and which in all probability constituted the first stage at which the human mind rested in its melancholy degeneracy from the simple faith of the fathers of the race.

(v.) At the time when the earliest books of the Bible were written, Polytheism was, with the exception of the descendants of Abraham and a few individuals of other tribes, apparently universal among men. To prevent the entire obliteration of divine truth from the world, God selected Abraham and his posterity as the recipients of a revelation concerning Himself, of which the assertion of His sole Deity was a fundamental part. We find, accordingly, that by that patriarch and his immediate descendants that doctrine was fully recognised as it had been by pious men who preceded him, and as it was by

such men as Melchizedek among his contemporaries. In subsequent times, too, much intercourse with idolaters tended, in many instances, to seduce the Israelites from their adherence to this belief; but this only gave occasion for more emphatic declarations of the claims of Jehovah to be feared and trusted as the only God. At the giving of the law on Sinai, this doctrine was asserted in the most solemn and impressive terms; and occupies, indeed, in itself or its consequences, the preamble and the whole of the first table, as it is called, of that statute. In the address of Moses to the people when, before his death, he rehearsed to them all God's dealings with them, and exhorted them to continuance in His service, great prominence is given to this doctrine: "Unto thee," says he, "it was showed that thou mightest know that Jehovah He is God; there is none else beside Him." "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that Jehovah He is God, in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else." "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah" (Deut. iv. 35, 39, vi. 4). So also in later times the prophets were instructed to make to the people such declarations as the following: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and besides Me there is no God." "I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God besides Me" (Isa. xlv. 6, xlv. 5). In these passages, the doctrine of the divine unity is taught with all the clearness of which human language is susceptible.

Among a certain class of theologians, especially on the Continent, the position I have been endeavouring to establish has been disputed, and an attempt has been made to show that, from the writings of Moses especially, there is reason to conclude that the popular belief among the Hebrews was, that Jehovah was only their national or tutelar God, just as Chemosh was of the Ammonites, Moloch of the Moabites, and Baal of the Phœnicians. This opinion, which has found among its leading advocates such men as Bauer, Wegscheider, and De Wette, rests almost exclusively, as may be supposed, upon those passages in which Jehovah is called "the God of Abraham," "the God of the Israelites," "the Rock of Israel," "the Holy One of Israel" ("*numen venerandum Israelitarum*," as

Bauer renders it), etc. Great stress is also laid by them on the words of Jephthah to the Ammonites (Judg. xi. 24), "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess." "Here," says Bauer, "Jephthah places Jehovah on a level with Chemosh, and attributes to the latter the same power as to Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> On this I would remark, first, that, even admitting the words of Jephthah to bear the meaning thus put upon them, it would not certainly follow that this was his belief, or that of his countrymen. In arguing with an opponent nothing is more common than to take up his own ground, and endeavour to show how, even on his own principles, he ought to yield the point in dispute. So here it is quite possible that Jephthah may be reasoning on the assumptions of the idolatrous Ammonites, and showing that even *supposing* Jehovah were no more than Chemosh, still, as they deemed themselves justifiable in taking possession of such territories as they conquered in the name of Chemosh, so they ought to admit the right of the Israelites to occupy what they conquered in the name of their God. It is obvious, therefore, that even on the neologian interpretation of this passage it affords no certain evidence that the religious opinions of Jephthah were such as its authors would have imputed to him. But, secondly, there appears nothing in Jephthah's words to justify the idea that he considered Chemosh to be as much a real deity as Jehovah. On the contrary, his reasoning is obviously *à fortiori*, as if he had said, If you, attributing your success to Chemosh whom you worship, possess whatever you conquer, much more ought we to keep what Jehovah, the supreme disposer of all things, has given us. That this was really the idea in Jephthah's mind appears evident from what almost immediately follows in ver. 27, where he says, "The Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon." This plainly assumes the supremacy of Jehovah over *both* parties, and ascribes to Him His proper place as the only and infallible arbiter of right and wrong. To infer, in the face of this, from the mere mention of Chemosh, that he placed this idol on a level with

<sup>1</sup> "Jephtha Jovam æquiparat Camoso, et huic eandem vim, quam Jovæ, tribuit." *Dicta Classicæ Vet. Test.* Pars I. p. 17.

Jehovah, is as unjustifiable as it would be to ascribe similar views of God to the Christian missionary who, in arguing with Hindoos, should refer to Brumha or Siva as *their* gods, and contrast with these *his* God Jehovah. Thirdly, on the general argument I observe, that when the Israelites spoke of Jehovah in the terms already quoted, they must have thereby intended either the one true God or some imaginary deity. If the former, then they really believed and maintained the doctrine of the divine unity after all, notwithstanding the use of those terms which are supposed to be incompatible with this; if the latter, then the Jehovah they worshipped was as much an *idol* as any of the gods of the nations around them, —a supposition which would land us in no less absurd than impious opinion, that all the denunciations of idolatry addressed by God to the Israelites were directed not so much against that sin in itself, as against the indulgence of it in connection with any other imaginary deity than that which bore the name of Jehovah. Fourthly, adopting the former part of this alternative, as that which reason and good feeling alike sanction, there can be no difficulty felt in the mind of any candid inquirer, as to the reconciliation of terms implying personal or national relation to the Deity, with the doctrine of the divine unity. The supposed discrepancy of these seems to rest upon some vague notion, that a Being who sustains certain *universal* relations to other beings, cannot at the same time sustain *particular* relations to individuals or classes amongst these. But this notion is manifestly opposed to all that we are most familiar with, both in regard to ourselves and to God. To all His intelligent creatures He sustains certain relations in common, but to every class of them He sustains also other relations in particular. To all men He stands in the common relation of a Creator and Governor; but to some of them, besides this, He stands in the relation of a reconciled Father,—a God whose character has been specially revealed to them, and of whose pardoning grace they have had experience. Now, whatever community of *physical* relationship to God the race may enjoy as such, it is clear that, in a *moral* point of view, this class of persons stand in a relation of a far more intimate and endearing character to Him than the rest of mankind. Hence they are described as

"His people," "the flock of His pasture," the children of His love; and He is represented as in a peculiar manner their God, "manifesting Himself unto them as He doth not unto the world." In this relationship stood Abraham and his posterity to the Almighty. Jehovah had chosen them from amongst all people to be "a special people" unto Himself. He had favoured them with a revelation of His will, and instituted among them the ordinances of His worship. More than this, He had even condescended to place Himself at the head of their political constitution as the King of Israel, by whom all their laws were enacted, and under whose special direction their government was administered. Under such circumstances nothing was more natural than that they should speak of Him as their God, without thereby intending to question or deny His universal supremacy as the God of the whole earth. This is language which even those who have borrowed their conceptions of God from the Christian Scriptures do not scruple continually to use; nay, which they feel to be the natural and appropriate language of those to whom has been given the privilege of calling themselves "sons of God." That it should have been ever supposed susceptible of the interpretation which the authors I have named have put upon it, can be ascribed, I think, only to the disposition which all errorists display to catch at everything that can be constrained to give any countenance to their opinions, coupled with the melancholy fact, that the feelings of which this language is the natural exponent, are not those which Rationalism is designed or qualified to produce.

When we turn to the N. T. we find the divine unity very clearly and emphatically announced. God is addressed by our Saviour as *τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεόν*, the only real God, all others being merely phenomenal; and the acknowledgment of Him as such is declared to be eternal life (John xvii. 3). "We know," says Paul, "that there is none other God but one" (1 Cor. viii. 4); and again, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him" (1 Cor. viii. 6); "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. iv. 6); "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). In accordance

with this the Divine Being is always spoken of in the N. T. as one; and whilst His existence is affirmed as a positive and certain fact, and He is declared to be the ἀληθινὸς Θεός, the many gods of the heathen are presented as simply λέγομενοι, merely said to be mere legendary beings; and the idols which they worshipped are emphatically pronounced to be οὐδὲν ἐν κόσμῳ, nothing in the world, a mere nonentity, a mere conception or fancy of men, that had no objective existence.

But whilst the divine unity is thus pointedly and absolutely enunciated, there are passages in which it is stated in such a way as to intimate that in some sense this unity is also a plurality. When our Saviour, for instance, says, "I and the Father are one," we are irresistibly led to conclude that in some sense the unity of God is a composite unity, if we may so speak; that not only is there only one God, but that in this one God there is a union of diversities. So also in the announcement made to Israel, "Jehovah thy God is one Jehovah," there is a peculiarity which arrests attention and excites inquiry. These words announce rather the *unity* of the divine nature than the *soleity* of the Divine Being; they affirm not so much that there is but one God, as that the one God is also in essence and nature one. That such an announcement should have been deemed necessary must be allowed to be remarkable. Amidst abounding polytheism it is easy to see a reason for the repeated declaration that there is only one God Jehovah; but why it should have been necessary to add to this the announcement that Jehovah Himself is one, seems to furnish occasion for careful inquiry. A glance at the original of the passage will serve still further to quicken research. We there read, Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah, יהוה אחד יהוה אחד יהוה אחד. The use of the plural Elohim here gives an appropriateness to the declaration which it is impossible to transfer with the same force to any other language. Plurality and unity are thus obviously affirmed as belonging to the same Person, to Jehovah: He is Elohim, and yet one Jehovah. The only expressible idea suggested by such a statement is that whilst there is but one God, and whilst that God is one in essence, there is nevertheless a distinction of some sort or other coexisting with this unity and soleity, and compatible with it.

When such a declaration is compared with the doctrine of the N. T. regarding the Godhead, we are naturally led to infer that in all probability it contains an intimation of that mysterious fact, the Trinity, which is so clearly set forth in the Christian Scriptures. To the consideration of this we have now to proceed.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### GOD.

#### III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE—*continued*.

##### ii. *The Trinity.*

The doctrine or revealed truth we are now about to explore is usually designated the doctrine of the Trinity. This term does not occur in Scripture, nor is it used by any Christian writer before the beginning of the fourth century, if we except a passage assigned to Justin Martyr, but contained in a work which is now universally rejected as spurious.<sup>1</sup> But a doctrine may be taught in Scripture though the word used technically and for convenience' sake to express that doctrine be not found there; and there can be no doubt that, though the word *Τριάς*, or *Trinitas*, was not employed by the Christian writers to express this doctrine before the fourth century, the doctrine itself had been largely discussed and was fully developed in the Church long before this period. There is, however, this peculiarity about this doctrine, that it is more strictly than any other doctrine of the Christian theology a purely Church doctrine. Not only is the *word* not used in Scriptures, but the doctrine itself as a doctrine is not set forth there, *i.e.* we nowhere find a formal enunciation of it in the sacred writings. The only passage that has even the appearance of such an enunciation is the famous passage 1 John v. 7, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy

<sup>1</sup> See Suicer, *Thes. Eccles.*, s.v.

Ghost: and these three are one;" but this passage is now universally regarded by critics as spurious, and will in vain be sought for in any critical edition of the N. T.<sup>1</sup> But even were its genuineness admitted, it would be in appearance only that it enunciates the doctrine of the Trinity; for as the apostle is speaking of the *concurrent teaching* in favour of Christ Jesus, all that his words could be fairly held as declaring is not that the Father, Son, and Spirit are one in essence, but simply that they are one in witness, that they concur in the testimony they give. But though a truth be not formally enunciated in Scripture, it may be so implied in the statements of Scripture that it becomes the proper and necessary expression of these statements. In this case the doctrine is a conclusion drawn inductively from what Scripture announces, and so is as truly a doctrine of Scripture as any natural law—that of gravitation, *e.g.*—is a doctrine of nature. Whilst, then, we admit that the doctrine of the Trinity does not stand on exactly the same ground as the doctrines formally enunciated in Scripture, we claim for it an equal authority on the ground that it lies involved in the statements of Scripture, and is the proper evolution and expression of these. As a doctrine it is a human induction from the statements of Scripture; but the induction being fairly made, it is as much a part of God's teaching in His word as is any of those doctrines which He has formally enunciated there. The phenomena (to use the Baconian phraseology) with which we have here to deal are, on the one

<sup>1</sup> It not only is destitute of any valid critical authority (two MSS. of the fifteenth century cannot be held to be such), but we can with great probability show *how* it came into existence at all. Augustine, in a comment on the 6th verse, after his usual spiritualizing method, explains the water as meaning the Holy Spirit, the blood as meaning Jesus Christ, the Spirit as meaning the Father. Now, this indubitably shows that he knew nothing of ver. 7, for if it had existed in his copy he never would in this way have explained ver. 6. But his gloss became popular, and people wrote it on the margin of their copies of the Latin version, and so in the later MSS. of the Vulgate (it is not found in any of the earliest) it came, like many other glosses, to be incorporated with the text. Being thus introduced into the text authorized by papal edict, it became desirable that it should also appear in the Greek text; and so about the time of the revival of letters some one translated it from the Latin into Greek, and thus it found its way into two Greek copies of that date. This verse is therefore clearly apocryphal: we have no more authority for it than we have for the book of Tobit or the story of Bel and the Dragon.



hand, the clearly revealed fact that there is but one God; and, on the other, the no less clearly revealed fact that there are three to whom the attributes and qualities of Deity in the highest sense are ascribed, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Both these statements must be received by all who acknowledge the Scriptures as the rule of faith: the question is, How are they to be construed so as that, without doing injustice to either, a just and harmonious expression of the whole truth contained in them shall be obtained?

It is here assumed that Scripture teaches the Supreme Deity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Deity of the first has never been questioned; and the proof of the Deity of the other two will be given farther on in our course, when we come to treat of the Son and of the Spirit specially. To those who deny the Deity of the Son and of the Spirit, the question of the Trinity possesses no interest; for them, in fact, it does not exist. It is only where the phenomena to be accounted for are admitted to exist that the attempt to account for them can be rationally made; and therefore we may safely assume the phenomena in proceeding to account for them, inasmuch as only those who admit them will follow us in our inquiry.

(i.) There are two hypotheses which have been adopted with the view of harmonizing the two classes of statements above referred to. The one of these goes on the assumption that while the divine unity is essential, the distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only *modal*; the other goes on the assumption that both the unity and the distinctions are essential, or in the divine essence. Of these two fundamental hypotheses there are various modifications. 1. Of the former the modification best known is that which passes under the name of Sabellianism, from Sabellius, a presbyter of Ptolemais, who flourished about the middle of the third century. He taught (as Epiphanius informs us, *Hær.* lxii. 1. 2) "that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one and the same; as it were three appellations (*ὀνομασίας*) in one hypostasis; or as in a man there is body and soul and spirit; and that the Father, so to speak, is the body, the Son the soul, and that the Holy Ghost is in the Godhead as the spirit is in man; or as the sun, which is in one hypostasis, has three energies, viz. luminosity, warmth,

and the form of its periphery, so the Spirit is that which warms, the Son that which enlightens, while the Father is Himself the form of the entire hypostasis; and the Son being sent forth once in time, like a ray from the sun, and having accomplished all things pertaining to the economy of the gospel and the salvation of men, was again received up into heaven, as a ray sent forth by the sun and again recurring to the sun. The Holy Spirit also is sent into the world to revive, to quicken, to warm, to nourish each according to their need," etc. From this statement the doctrine of Sabellius does not appear to differ essentially from that of his predecessor Praxeas, against whom Tertullian writes, and who maintained that the Son was not essentially distinct from the Father, but that Father, Son, and Spirit were simply manifestations of the one God. There is reason, however, to doubt whether the above be a correct statement of the doctrine of Sabellius. From other sources it appears that he held the distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit to be something more than a mere nominal one, and that the Son and Spirit are not mere powers or influences sent forth as rays from the central Deity, but actual divine hypostases, though not distinct in the divine essence.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the more definite and correct statement of Sabellianism is that it asserts that God is essentially one; and that Father, Son, and Spirit are simply forms or modes in which the One God reveals Himself as acting to or for His creatures, especially in the work of redemption. According to this doctrine, then, the distinction in the Godhead is not real or essential, but simply modal.

In recent times various attempts have been made by means of modalistic representations to preserve the *form* of Trinitarian doctrine in connection with such a view of the distinction in the Godhead as reason can comprehend. These have proceeded almost entirely from the busy brains of the Germans, and partake of the vague and misty character which is apt to belong to the speculations of that nation. Thus Meier<sup>2</sup> teaches that in the Godhead there are three Powers or Energies—the Power of Representation generally, the Power of clear or precise Representation, and the Power of Desire, to which the sum of

<sup>1</sup> See Mosheim, *De Rebus Christianis*, etc., p. 690.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Lehre von der Trinität*, etc.

all perfection attaches as an accident from eternity; a piece of jargon which Seiler thinks is made more intelligible by saying that there are in God three eternal, intelligent, and free Powers, existing without space or time, but consisting with each other, and so combined that the one works through the other, and that in such a way as that they are powers of one substance and Godhead. Kant has adopted the modalistic view, but has presented it in a much distincter and more intelligible form. He regards God as the Father inasmuch as He is the benevolent Creator of the world; as the Son inasmuch as He is the Upholder and Governor of the human race, in which He represents the archeal type of Man as conceived and loved by Him; and as the Holy Ghost inasmuch as He suspends His complacency on the condition of man's accordance with His arrangement as moral Governor, with the condition on which alone He can delight in His creatures. Hegel's view is thus expressed:—"God as a living Spirit is this: To distinguish Himself from Himself, to posit another, and in this other to remain identical with Himself. This eternal idea is in the Christian religion expressed as Tri-unity. The kingdom of the Father is God in His eternal idea, of Himself and for Himself, so to speak, before and outside of the making of the world. The kingdom of the Son is the eternal idea of God in the elements of consciousness, or the difference [the positing of Himself by God as another]. This other left as independent is the world. The kingdom of the Spirit is the idea in the element of the Church. God is as Spirit, and this Spirit as existing is the Church."

These more recent forms of modalism cannot be regarded as making any pretensions to a just statement of the doctrine of Scripture on the subject of the Trinity; they are mere utterances of philosophic speculation, clothed in language borrowed from theology, but having in themselves no element of theologic truth. We may therefore content ourselves with having glanced at them in passing.

2. Opposed to this modalistic hypothesis stands the Catholic doctrine that there is a threefold distinction in the essence of the one Godhead. This doctrine was first clearly enunciated as the doctrine of the Church by the Council of Nice in 325. Previous to this the writings of the Fathers indicate much of

fluctuation and unsettledness in the belief of the orthodox on this head. Whilst the Deity of the Son, or Logos, and of the Spirit was firmly held, it was not settled whether the Logos and Pneuma had existed eternally in the essence of the Father, and been temporally developed out of that essence either by emanation or by a direct action of the divine will, so that they are God only in a subordinate sense; or whether the Logos and the Pneuma existed eternally as distinct hypostases with the Father in the one Godhead. The appearance and labours of Arius brought these inquiries to an issue. He maintained that the Son is begotten of the Father in the sense of being created by Him, the alone God, before all ages; that He is not of the same essence with the Father; that He is not of the Father, but created by God, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, from things that are not; that, in short, He is a creature in the proper sense of the term, though the first and highest of creatures. In opposition to Arius, Athanasius, the champion of orthodoxy, maintained that the Son is truly and properly God, of the same essence with the Father; and on his opinions the Council of Nice set the stamp of its authority. The doctrine of the Trinity, as expressed by the Council in the creed which takes its name from their assembly, is enunciated thus: "We believe in one God, Father almighty, Maker of all things seen and unseen; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the essence of the Father, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father; by whom all things were made, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, etc., and in the Holy Ghost. Those that say that there was a time when He was not, and that He was not before He was begotten, and that He was made of things that are not; or say that He is of a different hypostasis or essence from the Father, or that the Son of God is created, nourished, and capable of being changed, the Catholic Church anathematizes." In this creed we have the germ of what has since been held as the Catholic doctrine on this subject. What is called (though improperly as respects its authorship) the Athanasian Creed may be regarded as enunciating in a fuller form what we have in the Nicene Creed in the germ: "The Catholic faith is that we venerate one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither

confounding the Persons nor separating the substance. The Person of the Father is one, of the Son another, of the Holy Spirit another. But the Divinity of Father, Son, and Spirit is one, their glory equal, coeternal their majesty. . . . The Father is neither made, nor created, nor begotten : The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten : The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. Therefore there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity there is nothing prior or posterior, nothing greater or less ; but all the three Persons are coeternal and coequal, so that in all things both a Trinity in unity and a unity in Trinity is to be worshipped."

This, though constituting the Catholic and orthodox belief, has not always been stated in the same way by those who have adhered to it. In the Confessions of the Churches of the Reformation, the phraseology of the earlier creeds is generally adopted. Thus the Scottish Confession of Faith on this head is, "In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." In the Articles of the Church of England the doctrine is thus laid down : "In the unity of the divine nature there are three Persons : Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Similar is the language of the Augsburg Confession, that is, the Confession of the Lutheran Church : "The decree of the Nicene Synod is without dubitation to be believed, viz. that there is one Divine Essence which is and is called God, eternal, incorporeal, indivisible ; and yet there are three Persons of the same essence and power, and coeternal, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." But whilst the Confessions present this uniformity, in the writings of individuals we find considerable diversity of statement of what is professedly the same belief. A few of these statements it may be useful to cite for the purpose of comparison. I begin with Calvin ; in his *Institutes*, Bk. I. c. 13, § 2, he thus writes : "God predicates that He is unique (*unicum*), yet so as that He distinctly proposes to be considered in three persons ; which unless we hold, there will flutter in our brain only the bare and empty name of God without the true God. Moreover, lest any should dream

of a threefold God, or think that the simple essence of God is torn by three persons, we must seek a short and easy definition, which may free us from all error." He then goes on to defend the use of the word Person, which he contends is synonymous with the Greek *ὑπόστασις*, a term used by the apostle in speaking of Christ (Heb. i. 3); after which he says, "But leaving disputes about words, let us come to the thing itself. I call a Person, then, a subsistence in the essence of God which in relation to others is distinguished by an incommunicable propriety. By the name of subsistence we would understand something else than essence. . . . Each of the three subsistences, I say, is, in relation to the others, distinguished by a propriety. Relation is here distinctly expressed; because where there is mention of God simple and indefinite, the name refers not less to the Son and Spirit than to the Father. As soon, however, as the Father is compared with the Son, each is by His own propriety discriminated from the other. In fine, I assert that whatever is proper to each is incommunicable, because what serves as a note of distinction to the Father cannot suit or be transferred to the Son. Nor am I unwilling to accept the definition of Tertullian, provided it be rightly taken, 'that there is in God a certain disposition or economy which does not in any way detract from the unity of essence.'" Gerhard: "The general theory is summed up in three heads:—(1) That of these three persons the essence is one, and undivided; (2) that these three persons are really and truly distinct from each other; (3) that they are distinguished by personal properties." Turretine: "In the alone and most simple essence of God there are three distinct Persons, which by communicable properties or modes of subsisting are distinguished from each other, so that the one is not the other, though by an ineffable *ἐμπεριχώρησις* they ever abide and exist in each other. . . . Whence it appears—(1) That the divine essence is distinguished from the Persons principally by this, that it is communicable, whilst the Persons are distinguished by incommunicable propriety; (2) that it differs from other singular natures in that whilst they are communicated to only one subject, and are terminated in a single subsistence, because they are finite, this, because it is

infinite, may admit more.”<sup>1</sup> Marckius: “To the knowledge of the Trinity go these things—(1) That the essence of God is alone and most simple, against the Tritheists and Triformians; (2) that there are three modes of the subsistence of this one essence relatively and terminatively distinct from the essence, not mere names, against the Sabellians and Patripassians; (3) that these Persons agree in this one essence, which the Nicenes expressed by *ὁμοούσιον*, in *ἰσότητα* or equality of honour, and in *ἐμπεριχώρησια* or mutual inexistence, as when Christ says (John xiv. 11), ‘Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me;’ (4) that the Persons are distinguished from each other by *name* as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by *order*, by *mode of operating*, by *works ad extra*, most of all by *personal properties* or *characters* which belong to the Persons in concrete, and are relative rather than absolute.”<sup>2</sup> Sherlock: “It is plain the persons are perfectly distinct. A person is an intelligent being; and to say there are three divine persons and not three distinct infinite minds is both heresy and nonsense.”<sup>3</sup> This would seem to be an assertion of Tritheism; but Sherlock maintains that these three minds are inseparably one God. Whether this be not “both heresy and nonsense” may be fairly asked. Dr. Wardlaw has quoted some sentences from Swift, expressed with all the Dean’s usual clearness and vigour, in which he sums up the doctrine “as delivered in the Holy Scriptures,” thus: “God commands us to believe there is a union and there is a distinction; but what that union is or what that distinction is all mankind are equally ignorant; and must continue so, at least till the day of judgment, without some new revelation. Therefore I shall again repeat the doctrine of the Trinity as it is positively affirmed in Scripture: That God is there expressed in three different names as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost; that each of these is God, and that there is but one God. But this union and distinction are a mystery utterly unknown to mankind.”<sup>4</sup> This statement might admit of a modalistic explanation; but it is evident from the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Theol., loc. tert.*, qu. 25, § 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Medulla*, v.

<sup>3</sup> *Vind. of the Trinity*, § 4, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted from Swift’s *Works*, vol. iii. p. 434, in Wardlaw’s *Syst. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 4.

discourse that such was not the writer's intention. I add only the statement of the doctrine by Dr. Pye Smith: "In the absolute perfect unity of the Divine Essence there are three objects of our conception, or subjects known by different properties, which are in the Scriptures designated by the attribution of such appellations, pronouns, qualities, and acts as are proper to rational, intelligent, and distinct Persons. Instead of Persons the term subsistence is by many preferred. These three Divine Subsistences are not separate Essences (this notion would be Tritheism). Nor mere names, or properties, or modes of action (Modalism or Sabellianism); but this unity of Subsistences is an essential, necessary, and unchangeable property of the Divine Essence. There are Hypostatical Characters or Personal Properties which are distinctive of each Person, and which express the *relations* of each to the others." <sup>1</sup>

On reviewing these statements it will be seen that with varieties of phraseology, and more or less of fulness, they all enunciate substantially the same doctrine; with the exception of Sherlock, who, in his desire to make the doctrine more accordant with ordinary modes of thought, has stated it in such a way as to expose himself to the charge of Tritheism, or the assertion of the existence of three distinct Deities. For this he was severely called to account at the time his work was published, especially by the famous Dr. South, who brought all his powers of wit and reasoning to bear upon the object of his attack, but whose productions in the controversy are disfigured by coarse invective and angry sarcasm. It is somewhat remarkable that John Howe should have expressed a view very much like that of Sherlock. He, however, is somewhat more cautious than Sherlock; contenting himself with merely suggesting that as we find "two different natures continuing distinct but so united as to be one thing," in ourselves, it is "more easily supposable of congenerous natures." He accordingly pleads for the possibility of three distinct Spirits being so united in the Deity as to be truly one thing; and maintains that this is not inconsistent with the divine simplicity. It is not very easy to see, however, how this can be. If two or more beings, whether congenerous or not, are

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, p. 277.



united, there must be *composition*, and if there be composition there must be the possibility of dissolution; so that the quality of simplicity disappears. Besides, if this union was a composed or (as Howe himself phrases it) a "made union," there must have been a time when the making of it took place, a time therefore antecedent to this when it did not exist; and this is incompatible with the absolute eternity of God. If Howe therefore avoids the charge of Tritheism by restricting Deity to the one God, he by representing that one God as a composite being, made up at some point of time, falls into a no less error by affirming of God what cannot be reconciled with His perfect simplicity and His absolute eternity.<sup>1</sup>

(ii.) The orthodox or catholic doctrine of the Trinity, as that appears in the Creeds and Confessions of the Church and in the writings of different divines of eminence, briefly stated, is this:—

One divine essence subsists in three persons; or God is one in essence but trine in persons, inasmuch as the one in essence has three hypostases or subsistences; or God is one Divine Being in three Divine Persons.

For the better understanding of the doctrine thus propounded, certain things have to be observed.

1. The unity of the divine essence must be distinguished from the simplicity of the divine essence. In affirming the former we affirm that there is absolutely only one divine essence or Being; in affirming the other we assert that God is not made up of parts, yet not in such sense as that no distinction of any kind can subsist in Him.

2. In this doctrine both the term *Essence* and the term *Person* are used in a technical and modified sense. By the former is intended what the schoolmen called the "quidditas Dei," that by which God is what He is, or, as it may be more simply expressed, the spiritual self-existent nature of God. This belongs to the Godhead, and is common to the Three Persons. The term *Person*, again, is used, not in the sense of a distinct Being, but in the sense of a subsistence thought as having something proper and peculiar to itself by which it is distinguished from the others. There is to be

<sup>1</sup> See Howe's *Calm Discourse of the Trinity*, etc.

noted here, however, that the word, as used by some divines, has a somewhat different meaning attached to it, viz. that of a concrete subsistence, living, intelligent, incommunicable, not sustained by another, and which is not part of another. The former of these usages seems on the whole to be preferred.

3. That as regards their unity in the Godhead the three Persons are consubstantial (*ὁμοούσιοι*), equal in power and glory, and in-existent; in opposition to those who say that they are only of like essence (*ὁμοιούσιοι*), that the Son is subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit to the Father and Son, and that the Father may be without the Son or the Son without the Father.

4. That as respects the distinction in the one Godhead it is real and eternal, and is marked by certain properties peculiar to each Person and not communicable. These properties are either *external* or *internal*; the latter relating to the modes of subsistence in the divine essence, the former to the mode of revelation in the world. The *notæ internæ* are personal *acts* and *notions*; the former being (1) That the Father generates the Son, etc., and breathes the Spirit; (2) That the Son is begotten of the Father, and with the Father breathes the Spirit; (3) That the Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son. The personal *notions* are (1) Unbegottenness and paternity as peculiar to the Father; (2) Spiritation as belonging to the Father and Son; (3) Filiation as peculiar to the Son; (4) Procession (*spiratio passiva*) as peculiar to the Spirit. The *external notes* are (1) The *works* in the economy of redemption peculiar to each: the Father sends the Son to redeem and the Spirit to sanctify; the Son redeems mankind and sends the Spirit; the Spirit is sent into the minds of men and renders them partakers of Christ's salvation. (2) The attributive or appropriative works, *i.e.* those which, though common to the three Persons, are in Scripture usually ascribed to one of them, as universal creation, conservation, and gubernation to the Father through the Son; the creation of the world, raising of the dead, and the conduct of the last judgment, to the Son; the inspiration of the prophets, etc., to the Spirit.

(iii.) I have been the more anxious to place before you as fully and clearly as I can the so-called orthodox doctrine of

the Trinity, because I must now proceed to avow my inability to accept that doctrine in its entirety, and especially as respects the distinctions in the divine essence as stated in the Confessions and by the writers I have cited. My reasons for this are :—

1. That the doctrine as affirmed is to me unintelligible. After the most earnest endeavours I can make, I find myself unable to understand what it is I am asked or pledged by the doctrine to believe. To the assertion that there are three Divine Persons in the one Godhead, I can attach no idea whatever ; the assertion to me is simply a collection of words and nothing more. Now it is impossible for any rational being to accept a statement of doctrine which appears to him in this light. Other minds, differently constituted or more largely endowed, may understand the statement ; but to me it is not given to understand it, and I cannot honestly say I do understand it, which I must say if I profess to hold it. Observe, I do not rest my objection on my inability to understand *how* there can be three persons in the one Godhead ; this would be an altogether invalid objection, and would lead me to reject the doctrine of our Lord's true and proper Deity, the Deity of the Holy Spirit, and innumerable facts in both nature and religion, the *modus existendi* of which I cannot explain or comprehend. It is not that I cannot explain the *mode* of the divine subsistence as asserted in this doctrine, but that I cannot understand the statement as a statement. There is with many a confusion of thought on this head which requires to be cleared away. To understand a proposition is one thing ; to understand the truth or fact asserted in that proposition is another thing. These two kinds of understanding may not only be distinguished in thought, but they are constantly distinguished in actual experience. Most of the great laws of nature, most of the ultimate facts we are acquainted with, are clear to our understandings as propositions, but they are utterly obscure and hid from us as they are in themselves as truths or facts. Every one, for instance, understands what is meant by the proposition which asserts the law of gravitation, but what gravitation itself is no one knows. When I assert that there is a close union between soul and body, I assert what every man understands ; but in

what that union consists, and how the two are united, it may be impossible to tell. So with the mysteries of Scripture. That God is, that Jesus Christ is God-man, that the Holy Spirit is a divine agent, are propositions perfectly intelligible; but what these facts are in themselves, or how they are to be explained, is utterly beyond our reach. Observe, then, the distinction between understanding the terms of a statement or proposition or dogma, and understanding the fact or truth which these terms enunciate.

Keeping this distinction in view, it is further to be observed that whilst it is incompetent for any to refuse a doctrine simply on the ground that they do not see *how* what it asserts can be, it is, on the other hand, utterly unreasonable to ask any to receive a statement which is, as a statement, unintelligible. To do this in reality is beyond the power of any man. A man may repeat certain words which are unintelligible, but to repeat words is not to receive or intelligently to assert a doctrine. This no man can do unless he understands both the words and the sense of the assertion. If the assertion, "And the Word was God," was to me as unintelligible as the words *καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος* are to a person who has never learned Greek, it would be absurd to say that in any sense I received that statement. I receive it because I perfectly understand it, and because it rests on the authority of God's word. The truth these words assert, however, is one utterly beyond my comprehension; but that does not prevent, and ought not to prevent, my receiving the doctrine.

My objection, then, to the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is not that I cannot tell *how* there can be three persons in the one Godhead, but that I do not know what this assertion means; and as I can neither believe nor disbelieve what conveys to me no meaning, I am unable to accept this doctrine.

2. This doctrine seems to me in some parts of it to involve a direct contradiction in terms, and therefore to be incapable of acceptance. I do not here allude to the objection which has often been urged by Unitarians against the doctrine of the Trinity, viz. that it requires us to believe that three are one and one is three; for to this, which is a mere cavil, it is enough to reply that no Trinitarian ever pretended to assert

that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one and three in the *same* sense; what all agree in asserting is, that in one sense they are three, and in another they are one—a statement in which there is no contradiction. What I refer to is the doctrine of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Ghost. According to the Catholic doctrine, the Son as Son and the Spirit as Spirit are in the true and proper sense God, the equal of the Father, consubstantial and coeternal with Him; and yet the Son is begotten by the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. These statements seem to me to contradict each other. If the Son is the same in substance and the equal in power and dignity with the Father, how can He be the Son? How can He be begotten? Must not He that begets be before Him who is begotten of Him? And if the Father is before the Son, how can they be coeternal and coequal? So, also, if the Spirit, as respects His essence, proceeds from the Father and the Son, then as he who proceeds must be posterior and inferior to him from whom he proceeds, as he who is sent must be inferior to him who sends, the Spirit cannot be in essence the equal of the Father and the Son. These contradictions no human ingenuity can reconcile; and as it is physically impossible for us to accept a contradiction,—as, to use the words of South, “for a man to assent to two contradictory propositions as true, while he perceives them to be contradictory, is the first-born of impossibilities,”<sup>1</sup>—there seems here an insuperable barrier to our acceptance of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity as stated by the Nicenes.

You will find this subject carefully gone into by Dr. Wardlaw in his *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 33; by Dr. Payne in his *Theology*, vol. i. p. 239; and by Moses Stuart in his *Excursus I. to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. The late Dr. William Cunningham has pronounced the objection a fallacy, and he has said that the fallacy “lies in this, that it [the argument] proceeds upon the assumption that generation, and what it involves or implies, when applied to the divine nature must be the same as when applied to men, and that the same or an analogous inference may be deduced from it in both cases.”<sup>2</sup> Now, with all deference, there is no such

<sup>1</sup> *Sermon*, xliii.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Theology*, i. p. 298.

assumption as this made by those who advance the objection I have urged. All that we assume is, that the word "generation" means generation, and is used to convey the idea that in the relation of the Father to the Son there is something answering or analogous to the relation of Him who begets to Him who is begotten among men, something, in short, that justifies the use of that term. If those who side with Dr. Cunningham mean to say that there is *no* analogy between the two cases, why do they persist in using a word which asserts such an analogy? or if they use "generation" in a sense in which it does not mean what people usually understand by that term, let them define the sense in which they use it. We object that "eternally begotten" is a contradiction in terms. "So it is," replies Dr. Cunningham, "if you take begotten as meaning begotten; but it is a fallacy so to take it." How, then, *are* we to take it? I ask; or what is the position you really require us to believe? To this we find a reply farther on in Dr. Cunningham's book: "The eternal generation of the Son, then, just means the communication from eternity, in some ineffable and mysterious way, of the divine nature and essence by the first to the second person of the Godhead, in virtue of which the relation of proper paternity and proper sonship subsists between them, and is accordingly set before us in Scripture in the only way in which it could be unfolded in language applicable to a human relation which is in some respects, though not in all, analogous to it."<sup>1</sup> What the language of Scripture teaches on the subject we shall examine presently; what we have at present to consider is the explanation given in the sentence I have quoted of what is meant by eternal generation. This, to my mind, only plunges the whole matter in deeper darkness and more hopeless confusion. First of all, Dr. Cunningham tells us that the relation between the first and second person of the Godhead is that "of *proper* paternity and *proper* sonship;" and yet it is just because we propose to take these terms in their proper sense that he charges us with using a fallacy in our argument. Then, whilst implicitly admitting that "eternal generation" in the proper sense of the terms would be a contradiction in terms, he thinks he

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Theology*, etc., vol. i. p. 301.

clears it from this fatal objection by saying it means "a communication from eternity of the divine nature and essence from the first to the second person in the Godhead." And with this I find Dr. Pye Smith agrees. "The expression," he says, "used by many of the old divines appears to me to be unexceptionable, and to convey the truth reverentially and scripturally: *Communicatio totius Essentiæ Divinæ*."<sup>1</sup> Does this mend the matter or resolve the difficulty? Is "communication from eternity" less a contradiction in terms than "eternal generation"? That which is communicated must come from one being to another, and when a *nature* is communicated it must be from one who possesses that nature to one not previously possessing it, *i.e.* not previously existing in that nature; so that the statement which Dr. Cunningham puts forth is virtually that the Son has eternally existed, and yet at some time did not exist; which is as palpable a contradiction in terms as could well be uttered. It is well enough to say that such a communication that never had a beginning of a nature that, seeing it existed eternally, did not need to be communicated, must have taken place "in an ineffable way;" but I cannot help thinking that such doctrines themselves had much better not be put in words.

On the grounds I have stated, then, I feel it to be impossible for me to accept or teach the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Do I, then, renounce all belief in a trinal distinction in the one Godhead? By no means. I cannot read the Scriptures without having this belief forced on me, though it be nowhere, as I have said, formally enunciated. But the *form* in which the Bible presents the subject to me is not that embodied in the creeds of Nicea and Athanasius. What I gather from it is, that there are three manifestations of God in relation to the created universe and the work of human redemption, described severally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three manifestations of God correspond to distinctions in the Godhead for which we have no names, and of the nature of which nothing has been revealed to us; of which, in fact, beyond the simple fact of their existence, we know nothing. What is very plainly made known to us is the *economical* distinction between

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, p. 279.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—a distinction that may be stated in the most intelligible form, and made clear by a reference to the works ascribed in Scripture to these three respectively; and to this we are led to believe that a distinction of some sort in the divine nature corresponds, but of *what* sort we do not know, and therefore do not pretend to say. This way of stating the doctrine has the advantage of avoiding modalism on the one hand by asserting a real distinction in the divine nature, while on the other it keeps clear of the unintelligible and self-contradictory statements of the Catholic doctrine by simply asserting the fact of a distinction in the divine nature without pronouncing upon the *kind* of distinction as personal or capable of being described by any term, direct or analogical, in use among men, and by confining the distinction expressed by the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to the economical distinctions in the divine manifestations in relation to creation and redemption. We thus identify the Son of God with Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, and we regard the Holy Spirit as God working in the creation of the universe, the regeneration of men, and the sanctification of believers, and for this latter end sent forth by the Father and the Son. All that we venture to affirm beyond this is that in the divine nature there are distinctions corresponding to these; but wherein these distinctions in the divine essence consist, or how they are to be designated, we cannot tell, and therefore cannot pretend to believe.

Having stated the doctrine of the Trinity, we now proceed to inquire whether in Scripture any intimations of this doctrine are to be found. We have already admitted that it is nowhere formally enunciated. But though not formally enunciated, it may be so *involved* in the statements of Scripture that we cannot give them their fair and just meaning without admitting it. The evidence thus furnished I would now adduce.

The main argument for this belief, and indeed the only one that can be called direct and positive, is that furnished by the facts alluded to in the first part of this chapter, viz. that whilst Scripture most emphatically affirms the unity of God, it at the same time most clearly teaches that the Father is



God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. These distinctions, we admit, are economic ; they are made known to us in connection with the work of Redemption. But that they are not mere distinctions, not mere designations of different manifestations of the one God, but point back to a real distinction in the Godhead, is taught us by such a statement as that the Son as Logos was not only God, but from all eternity *with* God (πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, John i. 1), that is, near to, close by God, and that not by any mere proximity of position (παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ), but by intimacy of connection and intercourse,—a statement which conveys at once the idea of most intimate union and yet of real distinction. This is taught us also by the declaration of the Son, that He had glory with the Father, in His presence as distinct from Him yet equally sharing His glory, before the world (the κόσμος or ordered universe) was ; by the statement that the Son came forth from the bosom of the Father and was sent by Him into the world ; and by the statement that the Holy Spirit proceedeth or goeth forth (πορεύεται) from the Father, is held by and sent forth by the Son. Such statements point back to a distinction in the Godhead itself, to which the economical and manifested distinctions of Father, Son, and Spirit correspond. They do not tell us, however, what that distinction is, what is its nature, or what its peculiarities. Obligated, therefore, to hold that there is but one God, and yet that there is a threefold distinction in the one Godhead corresponding to the manifested or economical distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit, we devoutly recognise the fact of such distinction without presuming to say in what it consists, or in any way to explain it.

Now, if this be a truth, we may presume that though not formally announced in Scripture it will be found so alluded to, and so involved in what is said there concerning the Divine Being, that it is only by recognising it that we can adequately explain or satisfactorily account for the language used.

## CHAPTER VII.

## GOD.

III. THE DIVINE SUBSISTENCE—*continued.*ii. *The Trinity.*—(iv.) *Proofs from Scripture.*

1. We shall first examine the intimations of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament.

Attention has already been called to the remarkable announcement made by God to the Israelites, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy Elohim is one Jehovah," in which it is announced that the one God is not only numerically one, but in essence and intrinsically one, and this by the use of a plural noun to designate God=*Jehovah Dei tui est unus Jehovah.* (See pp. 34 ff. and 92 ff.) On this, therefore, I need not again dwell. Passing to other announcements in the Old Testament, I notice:—

(1.) It must be admitted by every candid inquirer as a circumstance not a little remarkable, that the sacred writers should have selected a *plural term* as that by which they usually designate the Supreme Being. Writing at a time when Polytheism abounded on every side, and to a people who showed themselves but too prone to take every occasion of forsaking the exclusive worship of the true God, it is natural to conclude that, commissioned as they were to teach the Divine Unity, they would have avoided every term or phrase which might seem to afford the slightest encouragement to set aside that doctrine. Instead of this, however, they freely and continually apply to the Deity terms indicative of plurality; and that without any necessity as respects the language in which they wrote, for, as their own practice shows, the Hebrew affords an equal facility for the use of the singular number with reference to the Deity. Some weighty reason, we may rest assured, gave rise to a usage in itself so anomalous, and in its possible results so dangerous to a doctrine which the inspired penmen were especially anxious to impress upon the minds of all to whom they wrote. No reason can be suggested so likely, as that they were

guided to use such forms because of their appropriateness as designations of Him whose nature displayed a mysterious combination of unity in one sense, with diversity in another.

To weaken the force of this conclusion, it has been objected that the plural form Elohim is applied in Scripture to idols, and as these must be conceived of as single, it will follow that nothing can be argued in favour of a plurality in the Divine Unity, from the application to the Almighty of a plural appellative. On this I remark, first, That whether we can explain the application of the term Elohim to idols or not, it is obvious that this does not in any degree help us to account for the application of the term to Jehovah. The question to be settled is not, Whether a term primarily used of the Almighty may be also used of false deities? but, How came this term to be applied to God at all? How is the fact, that the inspired messengers of the one living and true God spoke of Him almost invariably in the plural, to be accounted for? To this question it is obviously no answer to say, that the same form of speech is used of idol-deities; for this goes no farther than to show, that after the use of the plural form became common, it was extended to false deities as well as the true. The question still remains, How came this usage into existence among the sacred writers at all? and, as it is only upon the Trinitarian hypothesis that this can be answered with any degree of probability, we are entitled to assume for that hypothesis all the advantage which arises from the explanation of the phenomenon. But, secondly, There appears no difficulty in accounting for this application of the term Elohim to single idols, even upon the assumption that it is properly applicable only to the Triune God. As has been justly observed by Dr. Wardlaw, "there is nothing more wonderful in the name being so used *in the plural form* than in its being so used *at all*."<sup>1</sup> If, without impropriety, the terms applicable to the Supreme Being might be used to designate those idols which human ignorance and depravity had put in His place, then surely the *form* in which these terms were usually applied to the one, might, without impropriety, be used when they were applied to the other. It does not necessarily follow from such

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 490, 4th ed.

an application, that *all* the ideas attached to the word in its *primary* application are carried with it into its *subordinate* usages. Nothing is more common in all languages, than for words which in the first instance are appropriate to particular objects, because embracing a certain range of ideas, to become, in the course of time, by dropping one or more of these ideas, capable of being applied to other objects. So it appears to have been in the case before us. The plural form of the words applicable to the Deity came first into use as appropriately expressive of the plurality in the one Godhead, and having thus grown into established use, as Dr. Smith observes, "it came to be transferred to those secondary applications which in time arose, regarding *only* the ideas of sovereignty and supremacy, and dropping that of plurality."<sup>1</sup>

(2.) The conclusion above announced is confirmed by another remarkable anomaly in the language used by the Old Testament writers when speaking of God, viz. the combination of these plural appellatives with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives. To this usage, only a few exceptions are found in the Hebrew Scriptures from among hundreds of cases in which the plural appellative is used,—a circumstance which, whilst it shows that this was the regular usage of the sacred writers, at the same time proves that it would have been equally consistent with the idiom of the language to have followed the ordinary rule of grammar applying to such cases. For this anomaly the Trinitarian hypothesis suggests a natural and easy solution. Assuming the fact of a plurality as existing in the Divine Unity, there appears nothing strange in supposing that the sacred writers might be directed by this to such a usage as that in question. So remarkable a departure from the ordinary construction would naturally attract the attention of the reader, and lead him to search after further information, if previously ignorant of the mysterious fact involved; and if aware of that fact, would continually remind him of it as often as his attention was directed by the sacred writer to the being and works of God. Apart from this hypothesis, however, no explanation of this usage can be furnished; and it must remain as one of the most unaccountable and capricious departures from one of

<sup>1</sup> *Scripture Testimony*, vol. i. p. 510, 2nd ed.

the fundamental laws of human speech of which we have an instance in the literature of any nation.

An attempt, it is true, has been made to account for this anomaly by a rule of Hebrew grammar, expressly contrived to meet this particular case. Words expressing dignity, dominion, majesty, or honour, we are told, are commonly put in the plural, even when they denote a singular object, and are coupled with singular adjuncts. Of this *pro re nata* rule, I judge it enough at present to say that its advocates have never been able to substantiate its existence by any *decisive* instances, and that it has been consequently rejected by several of the ablest writers upon Hebrew grammar, even where the author's theological leanings might have induced him to retain it, had he felt that to be practicable.<sup>1</sup>

For this fictitious rule I would venture to substitute one which, if I do not greatly mistake, will be found to express a real idiom of the Hebrew language. It is this: *Substantives in the plural are commonly construed with singular adjuncts, when they describe objects in which the qualities of plurality and unity are combined.* In support of this rule, I would adduce the following instances: Jer. li. 58, הַחֹמֶת בְּבֶל הָרְחֹבָה עָרִיצָה, הַחֹמֶת עָרִיצָה, "The broad wall of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown" (the one wall consisting of many separate pieces of masonry), *Moenia Babylonis lata* (fem. sing.) *penitus evértetur*; Ps. lxxviii. 15, הַיָּם גָּדוֹל מְאֹד, "a great sea" (composed of many

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ewald, whom no one will accuse either of ignorance of Hebrew or of inordinate zeal for the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, declares that "it is a great error to suppose that the Hebrew language, as we find it, has any feeling for a so-called *plur. majesticus*." *Grammar of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, translated by Nicholson. Lond. 1836, p. 231. Some vestiges of this usage, at a period antecedent to the composition of any of the books of the Bible, he thinks remain in the words for *Lord* and *Master*, which are always used in the plural; but of this, as Dr. Smith and Dr. Wardlaw have shown, there is very great reason to doubt. See Smith's *Script. Test.*, vol. i. p. 508 ff., and Wardlaw's *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 448. Of *Elohim*, Ewald says that it "appears to have remained always in the *pl.*, in prose, from the earliest time;" and in another place he says that it is "designedly construed with the plural, where polytheism or idolatry is intended (Ex. xxxii. 4, 8), or where the angels may be understood at the same time (Gen. xxxv. 7); otherwise, in accordance to the Mosaic monotheism, it is almost without exception (2 Sam. vii. 23) construed with the *sing.* of the predicate, and rarely also with the *pl.* in apposition (Josh. xxiv. 19; 1 Sam. xvii. 26)."—P. 354.

floods); Ps. xviii. 15, בְּרָקִים רַב, "much lightning" (many flashes of lightning); Ps. cxxiv. 5, עֶבֶר הַמַּיִם, "The waters (the body of water) has gone over me;" Isa. xvi. 8, שְׂרָמוֹת אֶמְלֵל, "The fields (the glebe comprising several fields) languishes;" comp. Hab. iii. 17. To the same rule may be referred the following instances: Joel i. 20, where בְּהֵמוֹת is "*the animal creation*;"<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xiv. 1, where אֲנָשִׁים is "*the body of men*," who waited on the prophet; Isa. lix. 12, where חַטֹּאתֵינוּ is "*our guilt*" (consisting of many sins), etc. Of such usages, the account given in grammars and commentaries is exceedingly unsatisfactory. Many of them are treated as mere anomalies, and the student who seeks an explanation is put off with some such piece of information as the following: "Constructio est, qua nomen plur. fem. junctum sibi habet verbum sing. masc."<sup>2</sup>—which leaves the matter exactly where it was. Others of them are treated as coming under the head of verbs used impersonally, which assuredly is not the case; and others as belonging to the rule for nouns used distributively, which is just as far from the fact. I cannot help thinking that the rule above proposed supplies the simplest and most probable mode of accounting for such usages. That rule is only a counterpart of the rule regarding collectives in the singular being construed with plural adjuncts, and the one is not less natural than the other.<sup>3</sup> If the rule be admitted, the use of Elohim and other appellations of Deity with singular verbs and adjectives will, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, fall naturally under it: if that hypothesis be rejected, this usage is and remains an anomaly.

(3.) In perfect keeping with the peculiar phraseology already noticed, is that occasionally ascribed to the Divine Being when speaking of or to Himself. In the cases here referred to, Jehovah makes use of the first person plural, as in

<sup>1</sup> As they say in Scotland, "*the bestial*."

<sup>2</sup> Rosenmüller's *Schol.* in Hab. iii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Upon this principle the learned and philosophic Kuehner proposes to account for the well-known usage in the Greek classics of neuter plurals with singular verbs. "This construction," says he, "rests upon a deep and just sense of language (*Sprachgeföhle*). The multitude of impersonal objects denoted by the neuter plural was regarded by the Greeks as one object, *en masse* as it were, in which all individuality was disregarded, as a simple heap."—*Ausführliche Grammatik d. Griech. Sprache*, 11<sup>ter</sup>. Th. s. 49. Hanover, 1835.

Gen. i. 26 : " And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, according to *our* likeness." So also in chap. iii. 22 : " And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as *one of us*," etc.; chap. xi. 7, " Go to, let *us* go down, and there (let us) confound their language," etc.; and Isa. vi. 9, " And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*?" etc. These passages present a peculiarity which is well deserving of notice, and for which no satisfactory reason has been given by those who would banish from the Old Testament all traces of the plurality of persons in the one Godhead. The supposition that God uses this language with reference to the angels whom He had taken into His counsel; or, that He spoke to the earth when about to create man; or, that He uses this style to commend humility to men, seeing that He hereby speaks as if He took counsel with inferiors, which are the opinions of different Rabbins, may all be safely left to that neglect which is unhappily due to the great mass of modern Jewish interpretations of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> As for the notion that God here uses the language appropriate to a sovereign, it yet remains to be shown that the use of the plural number by sovereigns was customary among the Jews, or was known at all at the early period when the Mosaic writings were penned; and, moreover, even could this be shown, it would still remain to be proved that any analogy whatever exists between the style of the passages above quoted and that in which sovereigns usually speak when they use the plural number. The most natural, and, at the same time, satisfactory account of the usage in question is, that it contains an implied reference to a plurality in the divine nature.<sup>2</sup>

(4.) The instances hitherto adduced can only be regarded as affording certain dim intimations of this great truth; I have

<sup>1</sup> It is a fact not unworthy of notice, that the two former of these interpretations are indignantly rejected by the Rabbins themselves. Thus Abarbanel: "The Blessed Himself created all these, without any other thing, by His own infinite power;" and Kimchi: "None of the angels, much less any of mankind, directed His Spirit, or suggested counsel to Him when He was creating the world." Apud Witsii *Judeus Christianizans circa Principium Fidei*, etc. Ultrajecti, 1661, p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> See Smith's *Script. Test.*, vol. i. p. 524 ff., and Wardlaw's *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 42 ff.

now to call your attention to one of a more direct and palpable kind. I refer to the distinction which is made in many parts of the Old Testament between Jehovah as invisible and Jehovah as manifested to men,—a distinction which is so expressed, that we are constrained to come to the conclusion that in the one Jehovah there is a mysterious plurality of persons. The facts of the case are briefly these: In many narratives of the Old Testament, an exalted being is introduced bearing the appellation of “The Angel or Messenger of God or of Jehovah” (מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה, מַלְאָךְ אֱלֹהִים), who appears as the commissioned agent of the Almighty, who speaks of Himself as, in one sense, distinct from the unseen and eternal Jehovah, but who, at the same time, is styled *God* and *Jehovah*, and assumes to Himself the honours and the works of the Supreme. The only hypothesis upon which these facts can be reconciled and explained seems to be that which regards this Angel of Jehovah as a properly divine being identical with God, but with a difference of some sort, who for the accomplishment of certain great purposes of their common counsel assumed the human form, appeared to men as the Sent-of-God, had intercourse in this capacity with men, performed certain works on earth, and was known and worshipped by pious persons as manifested Deity (see Gen. xvi. 7–13, xviii. 19–28, xxi. 17–19, xxxi. 11–13, xxxii. 24–30; Ex. iii. 2, 4, 15, xiv. 19; Num. xxii. 22–25; Judg. xiii. 3–23; Zech. i. 12, 16, iii. 1, etc.; Mal. iii. 1).

(5.) The language used in predicting the Messiah is often such as to require a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity to make it intelligible or justifiable. Thus eternal existence is ascribed to Him (Micah v. 1); He is called the mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age (*i.e.* its master, possessor, ruler, Isa. ix. 6); His advent is spoken of as the arising of Jehovah and of His glory on Zion (Isa. lx. 1, 2); He is identified even as the suffering Messiah with Jehovah (Zech. xii. 9, 10); He is represented as elevated to Jehovah's right hand, and as God reigning over all (Ps. cx. 1, xlv. 6, 7); He as the messenger of the covenant is identified with the Lord, the divine King of Israel, to whom belonged the temple as His palace (Mal. iii. 1). Such utterances can hardly fail to suggest that in some sense the Messiah though sent forth by God was one



with Him. But such a suggestion waits for the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity to make it plain and intelligible, and so involves that doctrine.

(6.) In many passages of the Old Testament the phrase "The Spirit of God," or "of Jehovah," occurs in conjunction with certain attributes, qualities, and acts which lead to the conclusion that by that phrase is designated a divine being. Thus we are told that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters,—the Spirit of the Lord inspired the prophets, and through them, by His Spirit, Jehovah of Hosts sent His words to men,—the good Spirit of God is given to instruct,—the Holy Spirit is vexed by rebellion,—the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against the enemy—remains with the people of God—and in answer to prayer is not taken away from them. These and many similar passages would seem to conduct to the inference, that by this "Spirit of Jehovah" was intended, as by the phrase already examined, "Angel of Jehovah," a divine person in some sense distinct from, and yet, in another sense, one with the invisible Jehovah. To avoid this conclusion, two hypothetical interpretations have been advanced.

a. The one is, that the phrase is only a periphrasis for Jehovah, and that nothing more is implied in it than if the word "God" alone had been used. On this I remark—

First, that this hypothesis is in itself gratuitous and improbable. The phrase in question, by its very grammatical constitution, conveys to the mind the idea of something which Jehovah may be said to *possess*. We have analogous cases (grammatically, I mean) in such phrases as "the hand of Jehovah," "the eye of Jehovah," etc., which, as every person perceives, at once convey the idea of something *belonging to* Jehovah. So with the phrase before us. An attribute of God it may express, but God Himself it does not. The Spirit of God is *HIS*, not *HE*.

Secondly, though this interpretation, if admissible, would suit some of the passages in which the phrase in question is used, there are others by which it is plainly repudiated. Such are all those in which Jehovah and the Spirit are represented as distinct, and the latter as being sent by the former. Unless we would render the language of such

passages altogether meaningless, we must understand the Spirit of Jehovah as something distinguishable from Jehovah simply so designated. When, *e.g.*, God is said to have testified against the Israelites by His Spirit in (or through) His prophets (Neh. ix. 30), it would be as reasonable to argue that the prophets of God mean Himself, as that His Spirit means nothing more.

b. The other hypothesis is, that by the phrase "Spirit of Jehovah," is intended some *attribute* of the Deity, such as *power, wisdom*, etc. That such *may* be the meaning of the phrase has been already conceded; but it needs only a slight glance at the passages in which it is used to satisfy us that this interpretation will not suit *all* of them. What, for instance, could David mean, upon this hypothesis, by the following prayer: "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy holy Spirit from me"? (Ps. li. 11). This language evidently implies that the Psalmist *had* God's holy Spirit; consequently, upon this hypothesis, that he possessed *a divine attribute*,—which is absurd. Again, in another passage, the prophet declares, respecting the Messiah, that "the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. xi. 2). Now we have only to apply the interpretation under consideration to this passage, to make the language of the prophet that of absolute absurdity. Let us take any of the divine attributes,—that of *power*, for instance,—and how will the passage read? "The power of God shall rest upon him, the power of God of wisdom and understanding, the power of God of counsel and might, *i.e.* power, the power of God of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Can any intelligible idea be gathered from this confused jargon of words? Or can we suppose for a moment that such was the style of men who wrote by inspiration of God?

It is obvious that neither of these hypotheses will suffice to explain the phenomena. Our only consistent course, therefore, is to set them aside, and adopt that which will, *viz.* that by the Spirit of Jehovah is intended that divine subsistence to whom a similar appellation is given in the New Testament, and who there appears as the equal of the Father and the Son, the third person in the undivided Trinity. On

this hypothesis all the passages in question admit of an easy and harmonious explanation; so that, even though we were unwilling to adopt it, no other course would seem to be open to us on the principles of sound inductive reasoning.<sup>1</sup>

(7.) Besides the passages already adduced as containing intimations of a plurality of persons in the one Godhead, there are one or two others which it is important to notice, chiefly because they seem to convey that intimation in connection with an allusion to the *threefold extent* of that plurality as more clearly revealed in the New Testament. I pass over such passages as Num. vi. 22-27 and Isa. vi. 1-5, where the whole amount of evidence bearing upon this question resolves itself into this, that in the former the name of Jehovah, and in the latter the ascription to Him of holiness, is *thrice* repeated. On this I humbly apprehend no argument of any kind can be built, in the face of the obvious fact that the threefold repetition of a word or phrase is a common Biblical mode of adding force and vehemence to an affirmation. Thus Jeremiah represents the Jews as saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;" and the same prophet himself commences one of his oracles with the exclamation, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."<sup>2</sup> In fact, the number *three* appears to have been very generally regarded as carrying with it the idea of *completeness* and *magnitude*; of which we have illustrations, not only in the Greek and Latin classics, but also in the languages, traditions, and proverbs of many nations.<sup>3</sup> If any shall insist

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. J. Pye Smith's *Discourse on the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit*. Lond. 1831.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. vii. 4, xxii. 29. Comp. also Ezek. xxi. 32, and 2 Sam. xviii. 33. So also in the New Testament the judgments of God upon His enemies are announced by an angel saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of earth," etc. (Rev. viii. 13).

<sup>3</sup> Compare such phrases and sayings as the following:—"Felices *ter et amplius* quos," etc., Hor. *Carm.* I. xiii. 17. "*Ter* si resurgat murus . . . *ter* pereat," etc., *Carm.* III. iii. 65. "*Illi æs triplex* circa pectus erat," etc., *Carm.* I. iii. 10. "*Κακῶν τρικυμία*, the greatest of evils," Æsch. *Prom.* V. 1051 (cf. Blomfield, *Gloss. in loc. et in Agam.* 237). "*Τριτάλαιναί κῆραι*," Eurip. *Hippol.* 739-40. "*Τρισμάχαρις σοίγς κασίγνηται*," Hom. *Od.* vi. 155. "*Ἐν τριῖν ὥραισιν* κ. τ. λ. *Τρία δὲ εἶδη ἐμίσσησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου*, κ. τ. λ.," Sap. *Sirac.* xxv. 1, 2; cf. xxvi. 5. "By three things the world stands, the Law, Religion, Beneficence," Simon the Just. "Have these three things always in mind, and

that, at the basis and origin of this widespread notion there lies an obscure reminiscence of primitive tradition regarding the threefold perfection of the divine nature, I shall not certainly dispute the assertion; at the same time, this will furnish no good reason for our considering any passage of Scripture in which the linguistic usage arising from this notion is exemplified as affording a direct allusion to the Trinity. The same objection, however, does not apply to such a passage as the following: "In all their afflictions there was no affliction, but the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and grace He redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them from the beginning. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, so that He was turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them" (Isa. lxiii. 9, 10).<sup>1</sup> In this passage mention is made not only of Jehovah as such, but of the Angel of His Presence and His Holy Spirit, phrases which we have already seen to designate divine persons, and which are used in this passage with the same mingling of the ideas of identity and diversity between them and Jehovah which we have seen in other passages. Upon the strength of our previous observations, therefore, we are justified in adducing this as a remarkable intimation of the doctrine of the Trinity; in which light it has been regarded by many very able scholars.<sup>2</sup>

Another passage to the same effect occurs, Isa. xlviii. 16,

thou shalt not sin, viz. that above thee there is an eye which sees thee, an ear which hears thee, and a book in which all thy deeds and words are written," Ribbi. "In three things is a man known,—in a cnp, in a purse, and in wrath," *Auct. incert. Rabbin.* etc.

<sup>1</sup> Of the initiatory clause of this passage various interpretations have been given. Our common version, following the K'ri (לְ, to him, for לֹ, not), renders it, "in all their affliction He was afflicted;" and so Vitringa, De Dieu, and others. The source of the K'ri here, however, is, in all probability, the difficulty of the text; at any rate the latter, being the more difficult reading, is to be preserved. It is also the reading of all the old versions and of the Targum. Cocceius proposed the rendering: "In omni angustia eorum non oppugnabat [quisquam illos], et angelus faciei ejus salvavit ipsos;" and explains it as meaning, that, no sooner did any one assail them, than the Angel saved them. This rendering of לֹ—לְ is supported by 2 Kings xx. 4, and by the analogy of לֹ—לְ, Isa. xl. 24. In following this rendering, I have preferred viewing לֹ as a nonn, for the sake of the antithesis to לְ in the former member.

<sup>2</sup> Among the rest by Michaelis, *Bib. Heb., in loc.*

“Approach unto me, hear this; from the beginning have I not spoken occultly; from the time when it was I was there, and now the Lord hath sent me and His Spirit.” The speaker here is the same who in ver. 12 calls himself “the First and the Last,” and in ver. 13 claims to himself the work of creation.<sup>1</sup> The speaker, therefore, must be regarded as *divine*. But in the verse before us this divine being speaks of himself as distinct from the Lord God, and as sent by Him. He describes himself also as the author of communications to men from the first, and declares that from the time when this, which he was about to announce, existed (for I take *אֵלֹהִים* to be the subject of the fem. verb *אֶלְמָדָה*), *i.e.* as Michaelis and others explain it, when the divine purpose conveyed in the following verses was formed,—in other words, from all eternity,—he was. Such a Being can be none other than the Second Person in the Trinity, the revealer of God to man, at once the equal and the messenger of the Father; and so the passage has been viewed by the great body of interpreters, ancient and modern. The only objection to this view, according to Doederlein (*in loc.*),<sup>2</sup> is, that in no other place is the Messiah said to have been sent by the Spirit; but, on the contrary, that the Spirit is rather said to have been sent by Him, as well as by the Father. But Doederlein himself admits in a previous part of his note that the word *רוּחִי* may be rendered as in the accusative here, *et spiritum ejus*, which would not only obviate his objection, but make the verse utter a still more decided testimony in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity than it does in the Authorized Version. To this rendering, I believe, no objection can be offered, either from the genius of the language or the usage of the prophet; and, as Dr. Smith has justly observed (*Script. Test.* i. 532), it is the rendering which the position of the word at the close of the sentence properly and naturally requires. We have here, then, a clear recognition of that personal distinction in the one Godhead which, in the

<sup>1</sup> The supposition that the speaker here is the prophet himself is so harsh, and introduces such confusion into the passage, that nothing but the absolute impossibility of finding another interpretation could justify its adoption.

<sup>2</sup> *Esaias ex recens. Textus Heb. ad fidem Codd. MSS. et Verss. Antiq. Latine vertit*, etc., J. Ch. Doederlein. Ed. 3tia, Norimberg, 1783.

fuller revelations of the New Testament, we are taught to express by the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Such is a brief outline of the evidence in favour of the position that, while the Unity of the divine existence and nature was emphatically taught to the Jews in their Scriptures, this was combined with numerous intimations of the existence of a plurality in that Unity, compatible with it and inseparable from it. That such intimations are otherwise than obscure when compared with those of the New Testament is not affirmed; but this is admitting nothing more than that they were appropriate to that dispensation which enjoyed only "a shadow of good things to come." Be it observed, however, that as the doctrine of the Trinity appears to have been revealed with an especial—we might say exclusive—reference to the Person and work of the Messiah, it is only after the intimations concerning Him have been considered that the full evidence in favour of this doctrine has been collected. As this yet remains to be done by us, in relation to the present inquiry, we must consequently suspend our final opinion until the full merits of the case are submitted to our scrutiny. The argument is cumulative, and it is only when it rises to its full height that we can estimate aright its weight and worth.

(8.) In the meantime, it may be observed that the conclusion at which we have arrived is not a little confirmed by the fact, that among the Jews the doctrine of a manifested Deity, distinct from and yet one with Jehovah, and even some traces of the doctrine of a Trinity, have been found to prevail from a very early period. The evidence of this is supplied by the statements of Philo respecting "the Logos," by the use of the phrase "the Word of Jehovah" by the Targumists, by the Rabbinical doctrines regarding the Metatron, and by certain statements in the Cabbalistic writings. The most natural way of accounting for the rise of such opinions among the Jews is by tracing them, as many of the Jewish writers themselves trace them, to those intimations in the Old Testament Scriptures which we have been considering in this lecture.<sup>1</sup>

There may be some who shall be disposed to regard the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Witsii *Jud. Christ.*, p. 301 ff.

reasonings contained, and the hypothesis advocated, in the preceding pages as fanciful and unsound. To such objectors I shall content myself with replying in the words of Archbishop Whately, used with reference to another subject,<sup>1</sup> "They cannot deny that the *phenomena exist*, and must have *some cause*; and the fairest and most decisive objection to any proposed solution is *to offer a better*."

2. What we have thus found adumbrated or alluded to in the O. T. we find more distinctly intimated in the New. There, not only is the true and proper Deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit clearly affirmed, but the allusions to such a fact in the divine nature as that expressed by the doctrine of the Trinity are proportionately distinct and unmistakable.

(1.) In John i. 1 the apostle says, "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."<sup>2</sup> Assuming that this refers to Jesus Christ the Son of God in His pre-existent state (it can refer to none else), it distinctly attributes to Him eternal existence,—for He who at the beginning of time already was must have existed from eternity,—affirms His true Deity, and, at the same time, intimates a distinction, without saying wherein that consists, between God as God and the Logos. It seems safe from such a statement to conclude that there is a real and essential distinction in the Godhead corresponding to that which was manifested when the Logos became flesh and dwelt on earth, though it would not be safe or competent for us to derive from this any conclusion as to the *nature* of that distinction, or the properties characteristic of those thus represented as distinct.

(2.) When we consider the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning Himself, we find Him asserting not only His pre-existence, and that He came forth from God, but also His unity with God (John x. 30), His participation in the divine counsels (John v. 20), His right to equal honour with God the Father (ver. 23), His having life in Himself as the Father has life in Himself (ver. 26), His community

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, p. 34, note.

<sup>2</sup> [The doctrine of the Logos is fully discussed in Part III.—CHRISTOLCGY.—Ed.]

of Being with the Father, so that the Father is in Him and He in the Father (John x. 38), and that in such a way as that the Father did the works which Christ did (xiv. 10); His being so identified with the Father that he who had seen Him had seen the Father (ver. 7); His sending forth the Spirit of truth from the Father (xv. 26), and other similar declarations. Such utterances do not in so many words affirm the doctrine of the Trinity, but it is impossible to give them their fair and full meaning without the admission in substance of this doctrine.

The same may be said of such a declaration as that of John: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18). The language here used is very remarkable. Not only is the Son declared to be the revealer of the Father, but this revelation is made not by communication to Him from God of what He is to reveal to men, but from His own personal knowledge of God derived from closest intimacy with Him. Further, it is intimated that this intimacy is from a present and abiding proximity to the Father. The Son is in the bosom of the Father. This is His abiding-place, so that He speaks forth to men from the very bosom of God. Closely akin to this is our Lord's own language to Nicodemus when He says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven" (John iii. 13). Here our Lord, on earth sitting conversing with a ruler of the Jews, speaks of Himself as even then in heaven. In the background of all such representations lies the fact of the Trinity as that by which alone they can be understood or justified.

In our Lord's Intercessory Prayer He speaks of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. With this we may compare the statement of St. Paul, that previous to His appearance on earth our Lord had existed *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, in the form or image of God, that He counted it not robbery to be equal with God, or that He counted not equality with God a thing to be caught at, but emptied Himself, etc. (Phil. ii. 6-8). There are difficulties connected with the interpretation of this passage; but into these we need not enter here; for on any interpretation this much is evident,



that the apostle ascribes to our Lord in His pre-existent state equality with God, an existence in the form or image or glory of God, and a laying aside of this so as to appear in a humble condition, a partaker of our nature, and in the form of a servant. The explanation which De Wette gives of the passage may be accepted by us as sufficient for our present purpose. "The thought of the apostle," he says, "is this: Christ had, when He entered on His Messianic career, the divine glory potentially in Himself, and He might have given it to Himself, could have manifested it in His life. But as it did not fall in with the design of the work of redemption that He should from the beginning receive divine glory, it would have been a robbery, an usurpation had He assumed it." It may be doubted whether this is a correct explanation of the concluding part of the apostle's statement. But the general purport of the whole is justly given, and with this we shall for the present content ourselves. It is plain that such a statement points to an essential relation of Him who became manifest as Jesus Christ, the Saviour, to God, which receives its adequate explanation only from such a doctrine as that of the Trinity.<sup>1</sup>

(3.) In fine, I refer to those passages in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are associated on terms of equality. They are so by our Lord Himself in the commission He gave to His apostles (Matt. xxviii. 19). The Apostle Paul also associates them as the sole object of prayer (2 Cor. xiii. 14). Now, in such a collocation three things are certified to us: *a.* That Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are beings personally distinct, and not mere manifestations of the one Being. *b.* That all being placed thus on an equality as sources of religious authority, objects of religious belief and prayer, all must be divine. *c.* As Deity cannot consist merely in manifestation, but must exist also in essence, these three distinct divine manifestations point back to a threefold distinction of some sort in the one Godhead. It is obvious that the doctrine of the Trinity, as we have stated it, supplies the only adequate expression of such a representation.

<sup>1</sup> "Though *μορφῇ* is not the same as *φύσις* or *οὐσία*, yet the possession of the *morphé* involves participation in the *ousia* also, for *morphé* implies not the external accidents, but the essential attributes."—Lightfoot.

By this induction of particulars I hope I have made it apparent that the doctrine of the Trinity, though nowhere formally stated in the Bible, in reality *pervades* that book, so that many of its statements become intelligible throughout only on the assumption that this doctrine is true. The principle on which I have proceeded is one the legitimacy of which none can question. It is the principle, in fact, which all scientific inquirers hold to be the only sound principle of investigation, where our object is from sensible phenomena to arrive at a conclusion as to the law or general or higher truth which they involve, and in which they find their explanation. The principle is, that the hypothesis which accounts for the phenomena, and which alone accounts for them, is the true one. This is a principle continually acted on in scientific research, and to the successful application of which the world is indebted for the brilliant generalizations and valuable discoveries of modern science. This principle I have applied to the subject before us. The sensible phenomena here are the statements of Scripture, and of these I have adduced a copious series for the purpose of showing that the hypothesis of the Trinity, as I have enunciated it, adequately and alone accounts for such statements. If, then, my induction has been fairly and truly conducted, it will follow that that hypothesis is scientifically established as true.

(4.) But whilst we are taught by such statements as those we have been considering that in the one Godhead there is a plurality, and a distinction which is threefold, it will be observed that no information is given as to the nature of that distinction or as to the relation essentially of the beings distinguished to each other. There is nothing said or intimated which should lead us to conclude that the distinction is personal; nor is anything either directly or by implication advanced concerning paternity and sonship, eternal generation, eternal procession, spiration active or passive, and such like. These phrases are purely ecclesiastical, and express theories which have been formed by speculative thinkers to explain what Scripture leaves unexplained. Where any reference is in Scripture to the sonship of the Christ, it is to Jesus as begotten in time and appearing in our world as the Word which, essentially divine, became flesh and dwelt among

men for a season, and having been in a powerful manner declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead, is now in heaven seated at the right hand of God, and in human nature wielding the power of God, and receiving the homage due only to God. So with the Spirit: it is of Him as sent forth by and proceeding from the Father and Son to carry on the work of redemption in our world, that Scripture represents Him as distinct from the Father and the Son.

(5.) And as it is in connection with the work of redemption that the economical distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is most distinctly presented to us, and that the fact of a distinctive plurality in the divine essence is made known to us, so it is chiefly for its bearing on the work of redemption that this subject is brought before us in Scripture. Men have made the doctrine of the Trinity a purely speculative dogma, but it is not so that it is presented to us in the Bible. There it is for its practical bearings upon us and our salvation that it is chiefly presented to us. It is not so much to tell us something about God in Himself that it is revealed to us, as to tell us something about God in His relation to us. As to the relation of the so-called Persons in the one Godhead to each other, it tells us nothing; as to the relation of these as manifested in the economy of grace, it tells us much. It unfolds to us the wondrous fact that God redeems fallen man to Himself by Himself through Himself. Of Him and to Him and through Him are all things, who hath reconciled us unto Himself by His Son, and brings us to Himself by His Spirit. It is when thus viewed that the doctrine becomes profitable to us for our spiritual life; and it is under this aspect that the doctrine should be presented by us in our preaching to others. It will do no good, and may do much harm, to puzzle men's minds with speculations on subjects too high for the human intellect to grasp. It can only do good to speak to men of what is plainly intelligible, clearly taught in Scriptures, and having a practical bearing on the spiritual interests of men. That God the Father purposed the redemption of our fallen race, that He formed the plan by which that was to be attained, that He sent His Son into the world to carry out that plan and make it effectual,

and that He sends His Spirit to give effect in men to that plan, are propositions which all can understand, and which all can apply for their own advantage.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### GOD.

#### IV. DIVINE WORKS.

We now proceed to consider the manifestations of God in Creation and Providence.

##### i. *Creation.*

That God is the Cause of all existence beside His own, the Creator of all things that are, whether subject to our senses or not, is a truth again and again enunciated in Scripture. The announcement of it stands at the very threshold of Scripture in the emphatic words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," where "the heavens and the earth" stand for the universe as distinct from God. In this short sentence the Bible places itself in antagonism to a whole phalanx of opinions taught in ancient schools of philosophy or incorporated with ancient systems of religion. This sentence is a denial of the Greek doctrine of the eternity of matter, of the Epicurean doctrine of a fortuitous concourse of atoms, as that out of which the Kosmos arose, of the Stoic doctrine of an all-compelling fate, of the Pantheistic doctrine of the identity of God with the universe, of the Polytheistic doctrine of a plurality of gods, and of the dualistic doctrine of a good and a bad principle dividing the formation and the rule of the world between them. Whether it is also opposed to the modern development-hypothesis or not depends on how that hypothesis is stated, whether as superseding a Creator, or only as describing a method by which the Creator works. Supposing that all existing objects in the universe around us are the result of a process of evolution carried on through long ages from a

primary germ or protoplasm, the question will still remain, Whence the original germ, the protoplasm itself? And if it be replied that it was formed by God and placed by Him so as in obedience to laws appointed also by Him to work out the processes which have resulted in the existing universe, then the fact of a creation and of a Creator is as much admitted as when it is asserted that the universe as it now appears came into being at His fiat. And that that is what the advocates of the development or evolution theory intend to assert, may be fairly argued from their selecting of the word *protoplasm* as the designation of what they regard as the primary element; for that word, compounded from *πρώτον*, "first," and *πλάσμα*, "anything moulded," means "the thing first moulded;" and as a thing cannot be moulded without a moulder, they by the use of this term implicitly admit that the world came in the first instance from a Maker.

In seeking to determine the teaching of Scripture on this subject it is not necessary that we should lay much stress on the use of the word *בָּרָא* in the verse I have cited and elsewhere in the O. T., or on the use of the word *κτίζειν* in the N. T., to denote the act of God in the formation of the world. Both these words properly convey the idea of *creation*; and they are the only words used where creation is unquestionably intended; but as they are sometimes used also in the sense of *making*, where the adjustment of already existing materials is alone intended, it is better not to lay too much stress upon them as proving the creation of the world by God. It is, however, to be noted that *בָּרָא* and *κτίζειν* are used in Scripture only where God is the Agent, and are never employed when the act of man is to be described. I must also call attention to the remarkable expression in Gen. ii. 3, where the historian, speaking of the consecration of the seventh day, says, "because that in it He [God] rested from all His work which God created for making (אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת)." In whatever way this last clause is taken, whether we render לַעֲשׂוֹת as a gerund *faciendo*, "by making," i.e. by an energetic process; or (which seems preferable) as a future participle, "in order to make," i.e. that having created it He might make it and give it such form as He saw meet; or, as in the A. V., "created and made," the dis-

inction between the creating and the making, between the primary calling into being and the disposing, ordering, and arranging of the material so called into being, is made manifest, and must not be overlooked by us. It is also worthy of notice that as ברא is nowhere used except of a creating by God, it would seem to indicate that it expresses a peculiarly divine act, and is not synonymous with mere *making*, such as may proceed from a creature.

In Scripture creation is invariably represented as the effect of the divine will, as resulting from the simple utterance of the divine *fiat*. "By the word of Jehovah," says the Psalmist, "were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together as an heap; He laid up the depth in store-houses. Let all the earth fear Jehovah: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 6-9). "Let them," cries another Psalmist after summoning all creatures to praise the Lord, "let them praise the name of Jehovah: for He commanded, and they were created" (Ps. cxlviii. 5). "Through faith," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3). St. Peter also censures those who "are willingly ignorant of this, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water" (2 Pet. iii. 5), *i.e.* in the chaotic state. To these Biblical utterances we may add two from the Apocrypha to show how the fact thus announced was commonly accepted amongst the Jews. In the Wisdom of Solomon we read, in an address to the divine Wisdom, "For Thy almighty hand that made the world of matter without form (*ἀμόρφου ὕλης*)" (Wisd. xi. 18); and in the Second Book of Maccabees the mother of seven sons, whom the tyrant Antiochus had doomed to death, exhorting the youngest of them to constancy, says, "I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not; and so was mankind made likewise" (2 Macc. vii. 28).

In this last passage the creation of the world is described as a making of the heaven and earth and all things therein out of things that were not. This is not an unusual way of describing creation. In answer to the question, What is it to create? nothing is more common than to say, "It is to bring something out of nothing." A little reflection, however, may suffice to show that such a statement is utterly absurd. If anything is brought out of another thing, that other thing must contain it before it is brought out of it. But in nothing there are no contents; nothing in utter emptiness, mere vacuity; and hence to speak of bringing something out of nothing is a contradiction in terms. The old maxim holds universally true, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit.*" It is wrong, therefore, to say that God made the world out of nothing. It is not thus that the Bible describes creation or the creative act. It tells us that God *made* the world and all things in it, that He *formed* the earth and the heavens, that He spake and they were made, He commanded and they were created; that He calleth things that are not as though they were, and that of Him and through Him and to Him are all things. But nowhere do we find any such expression that He made all things out of things that were not, or that the universe was created out of nothing.

Martensen represents creation as the calling into actual realization of the eternal possibilities of the divine will.<sup>1</sup> More clearly Sir W. Hamilton<sup>2</sup> has set forth the same idea. In answer to the question, What is our thought of creation? he says, "It is not a thought of the mere springing of nothing into something. On the contrary, creation is conceived and is by us conceivable only as the evolution of existence from possibility into actuality by the fiat of the Deity. . . . The divine fiat was the prominent cause of the creation; and thus Deity containing the cause, contained potentially the effect." This is the proper statement of the subject. All things are of God; and creation is simply the bringing into actual existence by His will of what existed from all eternity potentially in Him. In this, however, there is simply the correct statement of the fact; we have here no explanation of it. This is beyond our reach. We

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Dogmatik*, § 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Discussions*, p. 620.



must be content to receive the fact on competent evidence without comprehending it. Our highest science here but proclaims our nescience, and bids us be humble and adore.

## ii. *Providence.*

Besides the work of Creation, God reveals Himself to men in the work of Providence. He is not one who, having constructed a work, leaves it to itself without any further superintendence of it or care for it. On the contrary, He has constant regard to the work of His hands, and He shows that regard by His Providence.

The word "Providence" simply means *foresight* (from the Latin *provideo*); but as with a wise being foresight leads to the use of means adjusted to meet what is foreseen, the word commonly denotes not so much the mere foreseeing as the adoption of means proper to what is foreseen. In this sense it might be used to indicate that prudent care which a man takes for the future by arranging affairs so as to avoid loss or injury, and to secure advantage to himself and others. In this sense it is used by Tertullus in reference to the Governor Felix; and we speak of a "provident man;" and when a man thus acts we say that he "provides" for the future. Usage, however, has restricted the application of the term to the divine arrangements for the ordering of creature existences so as to accomplish the divine purposes. As these constitute the highest and most momentous of arrangements dictated by foresight, it is to them that by way of emphasis the term is almost exclusively applied.

Thus restricted, Providence means the agency of God in the universe of creatures, whereby the purposes of His will in relation to it and them are accomplished. Or it may be defined as "the exercise of the perfections of God in the preservation and direction of the universe in all its parts by the wisest means and to the best ends."<sup>1</sup> Or "that most potent acting of God by which He provides for His creatures already existing in all things, and governs them according to the counsel of His own will."<sup>2</sup> Or "that affection of the divine will from which it comes to pass that both the matter

<sup>1</sup> J. Pye Smith, *Theol.* p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> Burmann, *Synopsis*, i. 319.



and form of the universe continue to be, and that the changes in created things happen in accordance with the supreme will of the Creator.”<sup>1</sup>

The general idea of Providence has been by divines analysed into (1) An intellectual act, prævision, *πρόγνωσις*; (2) An act of will, decree, or purpose, *πρόθεσις*. (3) An act of operation, the execution of the decree, the fulfilment of the purpose in the actual sustentation and government of the world, *διοίκησις*. This last is Providence properly so called, and is to be regarded as the work of the Three-One God.

In this sense the word Providence does not occur in the Bible. We have it, as already observed, in Acts xxiv. 3, in relation to human precautions and arrangements; and the same word, *πρόνοια*, which is there translated “Providence,” in the A. V. occurs in Rom. xiii. 14, where it is rendered by “provision;” and in the Apocryphal book, the Wisdom of Solomon, it is twice used in relation to God (xiv. 3, xvii. 2); but in the canonical Scriptures it nowhere occurs in this relation. Though the *word* is not used, however, the truth it embodies when spoken of God is amply attested, as we shall presently see, by the inspired writers.

The Providence of God displays itself (i.) in the conservation of all things in order and utility, and (ii.) the governing of all things so as to secure purposed results. To these some add a third, which they denominate *Concursus Dei*, or God’s concurrence in events. But this seems superfluous, as God’s co-operation with any of His creatures is always conservative of the order He has established, and promotive of His own purposes, and is not really distinct from the other two.

#### (i.) *Conservation.*

The Providence of God, though distinguishable in thought from His Omniscience, cannot in reality be separated from it. As omniscient, God knows from all eternity everything that is to happen to any of His creatures in the universe; and what He thus knows to be He purposes to be; for, as He has power to prevent its being, if He wills not to exert this power He wills or purposes that the thing shall be. It does

<sup>1</sup> Wegscheider, *Inst.* p. 347.

not follow from this that God decrees all things that happen, or that all things are the effect of His direct agency. God decrees what He Himself does, and He does what He decrees. But many things happen which are not directly caused by God. These things, therefore, He has not decreed. But as He knew they would happen, He has purposed they shall happen, else He would have prevented them. They are thus parts in that great scheme on which He has willed that the universe should be regulated. He will therefore see to it that they happen as He has purposed. And this is His Providence.

A distinction is sometimes made between the *general* providence of God and the *special* providence of God; by the former of which is understood the divine control and management of the universe as a whole or in its larger masses, and by the latter the divine control and management of specific individual objects, especially such as are small and apparently trifling. But the Scriptures recognise no such distinction; nor on the ground of reason can it be accepted; for when it is of *perfect* and *universal* control that we speak, it is impossible to conceive how that can be exercised in the whole without being exercised in each special part of the whole. If the universe is to be preserved in order and utility, no part of it, however minute, can be overlooked; for, just as a particle of sand may impede the action and destroy the utility of some frail and delicate machine, so might what appears to us a small or trifling object, if allowed to fall out of its proper place or to depart from its proper acting in the universe, be the source of great and lasting disorder and evil to the whole; and if the universe is to be made subservient to the perfect carrying out of the divine purposes, then must all its parts conspire to this, else might some counteract others, and so the result come short of being perfect.

1. The providence of God in the sense explained is a doctrine of natural as well as of Scripture theology. The old Greeks knew and recognised it, as may be gathered from Homer's

Διὸς δ' ἰτελείετο βουλή.<sup>1</sup>

Ἄλλ' ἦτοι μὲν ταῦτα θεῶν ἐν γούνασι κίτται.

ἦσαν γὰρ καὶ ἐγώ· τὰ δ' εἰπὼν Διὶ πάντα μέλησσι.<sup>2</sup>

Socrates taught it to his disciples: "Know," said he, "that the

<sup>1</sup> *Il.* i. 5; *Od.* xi. 265.

<sup>2</sup> *Il.* xvii. 514, 515.

Deity is such and so great that He at once sees all, and hears all, and is present everywhere, and has a care of all things.”<sup>1</sup> Plato, after his sublime fashion, argues at length, that unless we are to impute indolence or imbecility to the Deity, we must believe that He sees all things and understands all things; nor can we suppose that He is indifferent to the most minute; and as physicians and artificers know that the safety of the great often depends much upon the small, and consequently are careful about the latter, it is absurd to suppose that the gods are less wise in this respect than they.<sup>2</sup> Cicero speaks of a “mind in the world, whether it be rightly called prudence or providence (for in Greek it is called *πρόνοια*), which provides chiefly for this, and is principally occupied with this; first, that the world should be fitted for continuance; next, that it should be in want of nothing; but most of all, that the utmost beauty and order should be in it.”<sup>3</sup> Seneca has written an entire treatise, entitled *De Providentia*, to defend the doctrine of a Divine Providence from objection arising from the unequal distribution of good and evil in life, and in this he sets out with asserting that he deems it superfluous to prove that this vast universe cannot subsist without a guard and ruler; this he assumes the more especially that the friend for whose instruction he wrote was not in doubt concerning providence, but only wished a difficulty removed out of his way in believing in it. In fact all the ancient philosophers who were not Atheists held the doctrine of a Divine Providence, with the exception of the Epicureans, who maintained that the gods took no care of human affairs, that the Deity did nothing, was involved in no complication of thoughts, planned no works, who stigmatized the god of the theist as “laboriosissimum,” whilst they proclaimed their own “beatum,” and whose assertion of this constituted the principal peculiarity of their system.

(1.) That this should be the case is not surprising, when we consider the natural grounds on which this doctrine rests. If we believe that God exists, and that the world is His creation, we must needs also believe in His providential care

<sup>1</sup> Xenoph., *Mem.* I. iv. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See the whole passage in the *De Legibus*, Bk. x., p. 899 D–905 C.

<sup>3</sup> *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 22.

of that world. "Si Deus est, utique providens est ut Deus, nec aliter ei potest Divinitas attribui nisi et præterita teneat, et præsentia sciat, et futura prospiciat," says Lactantius,<sup>1</sup> and from this he shuts up Epicurus in the dilemma, either of implicitly conceding Providence in admitting the divine existence, or of denying that existence in denying Providence, and so ranking with the Atheists in spite of his assertion to the contrary. As the world has come into existence by the divine volition, and continues in existence by the divine volition, its conservation is virtually a continuous creation, so that there is the same reason for believing that God providentially cares for the world as for believing that He created it at first. Nor can we conceive that a being of perfect wisdom, power, and goodness will for a moment intermit this care of the world He has made; for His doing so would be the result either of ignorance or impotence or indifference, none of which can be attributed to such a being without a contradiction in terms.

(2.) Further, as God could not create the universe without having an end or design in so doing, we cannot conceive that He would cease to watch over the universe in all its parts so as to prevent that end being frustrated or come short of. Whether we regard God's end in creation to be the welfare of the creature or the manifestation of His own glory, we must alike conclude that at no time and in no part of it can it be left without His watchful and superintending care; for who can tell what dishonour might be done to Him, and what widespread mischief to His creatures might accrue from one solitary disorder being suffered unnoticed and uncared for to exist and operate? More especially does this conclusion press upon us when we remember that a large portion of God's creatures are intelligent agents, with minds and wills of their own, and that of these a very important part are under the influence of evil, by which their free agency is biassed towards disorder and opposition to the mind and purpose of God. From neither the holy nor the fallen among His intelligent creatures can God for a moment withdraw His superintending control; for as the latter perversely seek to frustrate His purposes and introduce disorder into His universe, and

<sup>1</sup> *De Ira Dei*, c. 6.

the former, though devoted to His service and zealous for His glory, are yet, through the limitation of their faculties, incapable of infallibly determining the course alone adapted to this end, it is needful that both should be so in God's hand as that the perversity of the former should be overruled, and the latter should be guided so as to secure what they seek. The agency of one wicked man left to operate without control or check might throw the whole universe into confusion; and, on the other hand, "the consequences of actions are at times so greatly beyond the calculation of created intellect, the paths which lead ultimately to that blessed point to which all the actions of moral agents should tend are at times so divergent, that even the highest archangel might occasionally err and fail in the great purposes of His being, if all worlds, and all creatures, and all the actions of creatures were not under the superintendence of Divine Providence."<sup>1</sup>

(3.) The same conclusion is pressed upon us if we start from the contemplation of the conditions of created existence. All such existence must of necessity be dependent existence. None but a being who exists by necessity of nature can be independent. That which began to be, through the power of another, can no more subsist of itself than it could exist of itself; and so long as it lasts it must own its continuance to the energy by which it was created. The universe, therefore, as God's creature, must depend on Him for its existence; and were He to withdraw for a moment His superintending care from it, or from any part of it, instant annihilation to that from which it was withdrawn would be the result. To suppose otherwise would be to attribute to the universe an independent and absolute existence. But this would be to make the universe God; for that which is absolutely independent must be uncaused, eternal, infinite, and therefore divine. It is only in the gulf of an utter and hopeless Pantheism that the doctrine of Providence can be submerged.

(4.) Again, when we see the universe not only continuing to exist, but to exist in order, and to fulfil from generation to generation its great purposes, we cannot resist the conclusion that a superintending mind and controlling hand presides

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Theology*, ii. 264.

over it. By what power is it that this order and utility is secured and perpetuated? There are but two suppositions that can be made here. The one is that the universe is a mere piece of dead mechanism, which fulfils its purpose in obedience to purely mechanical laws, or that the successions of phenomena in the universe are under the superintendence of mind and will. But the former hypothesis is utterly incompatible with the most obvious facts,—incompatible with the fact of free motion in space, with the fact of attraction between bodies, with the fact of life, with the fact of thought and will, — none of which can be ascribed to any mere mechanical impulse or agency. It only remains that we recognise in the continued order and harmony of the universe the presence of a superintending mind, *i.e.* of Providence. Whether this mind acts immediately and directly in *producing* every change that takes place, or simply continues to creatures powers impressed upon them at their creation, and regulates the operation of these, it does not concern our present object to inquire. In either case it is the Providence of God which secures the order and harmony of the universe,—in the one case, immediately and directly, in the other, instrumentally, or through the agency of means.

(5.) Passing from these more abstruse themes, and coming down to the natural *experience* of men, whether as individuals or as nations, we encounter facts which have tended to carry the conviction of a special providence to the minds of thoughtful men in all ages. How often, *e.g.*, do we see a person, by the most unexpected concurrence or succession of circumstances, brought into the position which his natural faculties and previous training have fitted him to occupy! How often do we find, when great emergencies occur, that the man by whom alone they can be successfully met is one who unconsciously, or perhaps against his will, has been undergoing a process of training which has marvellously fitted him for such an enterprise! How often do we see events which we would have shunned if we could, and over the occurrence of which we mourned, turn out to be the proper and necessary steps towards results that fill us with joy and grateful wonder! How often does history show us that occurrences apparently very trivial have formed indispensable links in the

chain of events out of which great and lasting world-results have issued! How often does a mere apparent accident supply the occasion, without which some great result would not have taken place—some great crime detected, some mighty wrong redressed, some terrible danger averted! Of such instances history is full, and thoughtful men have been so struck by them that the conviction has grown on them that history is never rightly viewed unless it is viewed as a revelation of God.

2. Such are the grounds on which natural reason may build up for itself a demonstration of Divine Providence. When from this we turn to the Scriptures, we find the truth asserted there in the fullest and firmest manner. Not only are we told in general that the Lord reigneth, that He doeth His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that He preserveth man and beast, that by Him all things consist, but statements of the most specific kind pervade Scripture as to God's providential care and government of the universe. (1) He reigns in *the kingdom of inanimate nature*. Fire and hail, snow and vapours, obey Him, and the stormy wind fulfils His word; behold, He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also He sendeth them out, and they cover the earth: He left not Himself without witness in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Ps. cxlviii. 8; Job xii. 15; Acts xiv. 17). (2) He reigns in *the world of event*. Even the minutest particulars here are under His control, not a sparrow can fall to the ground without Him. He hath numbered the very hairs of our heads; and He will make all things work together for good to them that love Him. With Him is strength and wisdom, the deceiver and the deceived are His; He leadeth away counsellors spoiled, and maketh the judges fools; He looseth the bonds of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; by Him kings reign and princes decree justice; He setteth up one and putteth down another; none can stay His hand from working, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? (Job xii. 16, 17, 18; Prov. viii. 15; Ps. lxxv. 7; Dan. iv. 35; Matt. x. 29; Rom. viii. 28). (3) He reigns in *the world of life*. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. In His hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of

all mankind; from Him the young lions seek their meat; to Him the young ravens cry, and He feedeth them; it is He who appoints the bounds of our habitation, and determines the duration of our life; His eyes are open on the ways of the sons of men; in His hand our breath is, and His are all our ways; it is as He wills, as He permits, that any purpose of ours can be successful (Acts xvii. 28; Job xii. 10; Ps. xxxiv. 10, cxlvii. 9; Acts xvii. 26; Job xxxiv. 21; Dan. v. 23). (4) He reigns in *the world of mind*. It is He that of His good pleasure worketh in us both to will and to do; it is His Spirit that worketh all in all; it is He that giveth counsel and wisdom; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but He will guide His people by His counsel, and incline their hearts to keep His law (Phil. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xii. 6; Dan. ii. 21; Jer. x. 23; Ps. lxxiii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 58).

These are but a very few of the passages in Scripture which assert the overruling and preserving providence of God. To quote all the passages which bear on this subject would be to cite no inconsiderable portion of the whole book; for, as Hollazius truly says, "*Tota S. Scriptura nihil aliud est, quam pellucidum speculum, e quo quocumque te vertas, promicat pervigil ille oculus providæ directionis.*"

It may be added here that to each Person in the Trinity is the providential act ascribed—to the Father, as in John v. 17, where our Lord says, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work;" to the Son, as by our Lord Himself in this passage, and by the apostle in Col. i. 17, where he says of the Son, "By Him all things consist," *i.e.* are held together in order and utility; and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who describes the Son as "upholding all things by the word of His power" (i. 3); and to the Holy Spirit, to whom not only creation is attributed, but also the ordering of the ways of those that are God's children, and the disposing of events so as to secure the welfare of the Church.

A doctrine thus taught by reason and authorized by Scripture it behoves us to accept without hesitation, and to use for those practical ends it is fitted to promote. This wide universe in all its parts and in all its changes is under the constant inspection, care, and control of the Almighty. All



things, animate or inanimate, high or low, large or small, good or bad, spiritual or material, are subject to this unlimited and unerring providence. Nothing happens but with God's foreknowledge, permission, or appointment. The changes of the seasons, the variations of climate, the fates of nations, the experience and course of individuals, are all alike in the hand of Him who doeth all things according to the counsel of His own will, and for whose pleasure all things are and were created.

3. Some of the ancients who held by the belief in a Divine Providence yet restricted this to the care and management of great events, and denied it in respect of those they deemed small. Thus Cicero says, "*Magna dii curant, parva negligunt;*"<sup>1</sup> and Pliny asks, "*Anne tam tristi ac multiplici ministerio non pollui credamus?*"<sup>2</sup> The sentiment has been adopted by many in recent times, who, whilst professing to admit God's general providential government of the universe, deny or question His control over the minuter affairs of individuals or the smaller events in nature. But the distinction cannot be maintained, nor can Providence be thus restricted. It is only our ignorance and narrow vision which creates the distinction between great and small in the things that happen. As relating to the great end for which things exist and happen, nothing is great and nothing is small; all are alike essential to that end, and all must therefore be equally under the provision and control of God. Doubtless in the things themselves as compared with each other there are great, it may be immense differences; but as has been well remarked, "in every case the attention, presidency, direction, and effectuating power are *perfect*,—perfectly adapted to the nature of the case; and a thing or an event which to our extremely limited view may appear quite inconsiderable is a necessary link in the last chain, and even specifically the greatest events may be dependent upon it."<sup>3</sup>

But though all things must be regarded as under the providential rule of God, there is a sense in which some are more specially the objects of His care than others. Whilst His dominion extendeth over all, and whilst He giveth the beast

<sup>1</sup> *De Nat. Deor.*, ii. 66. Comp. also iii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat.*, ii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Pye Smith, *Theology*, p. 172.

His food, and to the young ravens when they cry, we are bound to believe that man especially engages His regards and is cared for by Him, not the race merely as such, but each individual of it. In Him we live and move and have our being; He hath appointed the bounds of the habitation of all nations; our days are determined, the number of our months are with Him; He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. But whilst He thus cares for all men, there is a sense in which some are the objects of His most special care. Whilst He is the Saviour of all men, He is so specially of those that believe. "We know," says the apostle, "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Acts xvii. 28, xvii. 26; Job xiv. 5; Matt. v. 45; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Rom. viii. 28). It is to His own people that God says, "Because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. xci. 10). Nor is this special regard of God for His own people other than what reason justifies. For the holy and ever-blessed God cannot but stand in a different relation to the good and pious on the one hand, and the ungodly and wicked on the other; and when He has graciously brought men into a relation of sonship with Himself, it would be unreasonable to suppose that those thus privileged are no more the objects of His care than are those who are alienated from Him and enemies to Him.

4. As to the *manner* in which the Divine Providence operates, it seems to me best not to say anything positively. All we are safe in affirming is that God operates in providence without suspending any of the laws of nature, without interrupting the course of nature, and without interfering with the moral freedom of man. The theories which have been framed as to the manner of the divine operation in providence are beset with serious difficulties, and are not satisfactory. The Deistic or Mechanical theory, which is as old at least as the time of Augustine, for he expressly repudiates it in the words, "*neque enim sicut structor ædium si fabricaverit abscedit, atque illo cessante et abscedente stat opus ejus,*"

cannot be accepted by any one who takes his conception of God from the Bible; for it imputes to Him an Epicurean indifference in relation to the world, and a want of freedom of action in His own universe, which are wholly incompatible with what the Bible teaches us concerning Him. Nor does Des Cartes' doctrine of occasional causes help us over the difficulty; for to say that God is the immediate and only cause of all changes, and that the so-called secondary or mediate causes simply furnish the occasion of His acting, is to annihilate human liberty, to make God the author of sin, and, as Leibnitz remarks, "to convert the universe into a perpetual miracle, and explain the natural by a supernatural order." By many divines the doctrine of *co-operation* has been advocated, according to which God is supposed to work along with His creatures, to act in common with secondary causes, and, as Quenstedt expresses it, sweetly influence them by Himself according to the exigency of each. But it is difficult to form any correct and clear conception of this; in the attempt to lay hold of it, it either wholly eludes our grasp, or we apprehend nothing more than that God works and secondary causes work, which is simply to state the problem, not to solve it. To assert that God in providence works along with natural laws and secondary causes, is merely to state the fact of a providential rule, not in the least to elucidate the manner of it. We conclude, therefore, that it is best to leave this subject untouched, and to admit that as we cannot explain the mode of the divine nature, neither can we explain the manner of the divine operation. As His being is unsearchable, so are His ways "past finding out."

(ii.) *Moral Government.*

In treating of the Divine Providence, we have been considering the government of God over the universe as exercised in the conservation and directing of all things He has made so as to secure the end for which they have been made. There is another aspect, however, under which the government of God as exercised over intelligent creatures may be viewed. As His creatures, such are under His omnipotent control, and He can do with them and to them what He sees meet. But

as intelligent their conduct is determined by motives; they act as they are moved by considerations which they apprehend by intelligence, and which their judgment approves. They act not as machines act, and in obedience to an external pressure to which they are obliged to yield; they act from internal impulses, from volitions, and these volitions are determined by what they judge to be desirable and right. Over man thus intelligent and free the government of God extends; and this, as distinguished from His physical control over His creatures, is God's Moral Government.

What is the just idea of moral government? On this point many fall into a serious mistake by imagining that moral government means government by moral as opposed to physical or outward means. Hence they are led to the conclusion that as God is a moral governor, He rules only by purely moral constraints, only by persuasion and entreaty, only by appeals to the reason, the gratitude, and love of His intelligent creatures; and from this they naturally pass to the further conclusion, that under a moral government penal sanctions have no place, and punishment of transgression is excluded. But such a conception of moral government is wholly erroneous, and as held in relation to the divine government sets aside all just views of God's *authority* over His creatures, and indeed virtually denies their being under government at all; for to persuade by argument and appeal is not to govern. Moral government properly means government for moral *ends*—government of moral beings which makes their happiness depend on their obedience to a law which is just and good, and which, for this purpose, employs any means that are adapted to secure this end. Hence *punishments* may find place under a moral government if these shall be found conducive to the promotion of that obedience on the part of the subjects by which alone their happiness can be secured. God has placed His intelligent creatures under moral law, and He may sanction that law by attaching penalties to the breach of it; and these may be of any kind, provided they be such as are fitted to move those placed under the law to observe it. Such is really the constitution under which God has placed us His creatures here. Just as in His physical government He has attached penalties to the

violation of natural laws, so has He attached penalties to the infraction of moral law. The man who transgresses a natural law suffers as an unavoidable consequence; and in like manner there is suffering consequent on the transgression of moral law. In the moral sphere God rules men to the practice of virtue by making that the road to happiness, while vice tends to misery. This is the order under which we are placed here; and there is every reason to believe that what we find to be the order of things here and now will *continue* to be the order of things hereafter in another state.

Such is the general idea of God's moral government. It may be of advantage to analyze somewhat more minutely this idea so as to arrive at a just and adequate conception of the whole subject. Let us take, then, the two terms of this expression, and consider their proper import. The object of inquiry is 1. Government; 2. Moral Government.

1. Butler in his *Analogy* has been at pains to explain what he calls "the proper formal notion of government." It is, says he, "the annexing pleasure to some actions and pain to others in our power to do or forbear, and the giving notice of this beforehand to those whom it concerns."<sup>1</sup> This is sufficiently formal and abstract, but it gives in few words the true idea of government. More briefly still, but less abstractly, the author of the article "Government" in the *Encyclopædiæ Britannica*, defines government in the general as "the administration of rule, law, and direction;" and more fully he says, "The system of rules regulating a society may be termed in general, *law*, and the fact and form of administering the rules is *government*." Both definitions are substantially to the same purport; and both presume that men living in society require to have their conduct directed by rule, and both imply that there must be a power by which obedience to rule is to be enforced. We may therefore at once conclude that in every system of government there are involved three things: (1) *Law*, either explicitly announced or so implicated in the course of things that it cannot but be recognised by intelligent beings; (2) *Authority*, by which the law is upheld and enforced; and (3) *Free activity*, which it is the design of the law to regulate and control. When these three elements are

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part II. c. ii.

united in full measure and in due relation, then a perfect government is exhibited.

(1.) Under a perfect government, then, there must be *Law*. Our English word "law," from the Anglo-Saxon *laga*, signifies primarily something laid down or posited. Hence it may be used of a simple proposition in which some general truth or principle is enunciated; but there always lies the subaudition along with this of something *prescriptive* in the enunciation. "That," says Hooker, "which doth assign unto each thing the kind, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure of working, the same we term a law."<sup>1</sup> In law also there lies the concept of event, of something consequent on something supposed. A law is properly predictive; it is the affirmation of a certainty as consequent on a contingency. "The very idea of a law," says Sir John Herschell, "includes that of contingency. *Si quis mala carmina condidisset fuste perito*; if such a case arise, such a course shall be followed; if the match be applied to the gunpowder it will explode. Every law is a provision for cases that may occur."<sup>2</sup> Every law, therefore, begins virtually with an "if" and proceeds with a "shall;" and it is essential to the validity of the law that when the supposed contingency happens the affirmed consequence shall certainly follow.

In the universe all things are under law. "Of Law," says Hooker, "there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempt from her power: both men and angels, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."<sup>3</sup>

When men unite in society, it is only as they are under law that they can be preserved from anarchy, confusion, and strife. Where men are a law to themselves, where every man is free to do that which is right in his own eyes, where no rule is prescribed for the regulation of conduct, where no restraint from without is imposed on men's liberty of action,

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Pol.*, i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Discourse on Nat. Phil.*, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Eccles. Pol.*, i., *sub fin.*

and no penal consequences deter men from crime, society cannot exist; the social bond is dissolved; and men subsist as mere unconnected units. Even the family union cannot exist without law, expressed or understood. If the relations of the members of a household are not determined by rule, if it is not at least understood that certain things are to be done and certain other things are not to be done by the individuals composing the household in their respective positions in relation to each other, and where it is not understood that consequences of a painful kind will certainly follow on the violation of any of these rules, implied or expressed, the family union exists only in name, and waits only some accident to be utterly destroyed.

Wherever there is society, then, there must be law; and where there is law, there must be government; for the law, to be effective, must be administered, and the administration of law is government. Government is, according to its proper notion, the exercise of authority through means of law; and the perfection of a government is where a law perfectly just and good is administered with unerring rectitude and unwavering certainty.

(2.) The law under which the subjects of a government are placed is not a mere accident, nor is it something that arises from natural necessity; it is the utterance of *authority*, the prescription of one who has a right to command and the power to enforce obedience. It may be a single person who wields this authority, as in the case of a pure monarchy; or it may be in the hands of a select number, presumed to be the best men in the community, as in the case of an aristocracy or oligarchy; or it may be vested in a senate of men reputed for wisdom in the management of affairs; or it may rest with the whole body of the people, as in a pure democracy. But authority there must be somewhere, authority both to make laws and to enforce them, else there can be no government. If a parent or civil ruler be without that right to command which imposes an obligation to obey, and without that power to enforce obedience which alone can make that obligation imperative, he cannot be regarded as possessing authority, nor does he govern except in name. He may advise, he may counsel, he may direct or persuade, but he cannot be said to govern. On the other hand, wherever this right exists and

this power is exercised, there is government, whatever be the form which that government assumes. Authority to rule, the right to make laws, and the power to enforce them, constitute the essence of government. A ruler who should neglect to make laws for his subjects, or fail to enforce those already made, would virtually abnegate his office, and deserve to be driven from it with contempt.

(3.) The laws which a government makes and enforces are intended to regulate the activity of those subject to it, so as to secure the end for which society exists and government is designed, viz. the production of the well-being and happiness of the community at large. Now the activity which has thus to be regulated must be *a. Intelligent*, i.e. it must be conducted under an apprehension of the meaning of the law and a view of the consequences, apprehended beforehand, of obedience or disobedience; it is not mere blind force acting fortuitously without purpose or aim; it is the action of an intelligent being who sees the path he has to follow and is aware of the consequences of deserting it. *b. This activity must be free*, i.e. it must be really activity and not passivity, the activity of one who is free to do as he wills uncontrolled by any external force, and is therefore justly responsible for his conduct. And *c. it must be elective*, i.e. not the result of a mere constitutional impulse, like the circulation of the blood or the action of the stomach, but the effect of choice, of *ᾠρεξίς βουλευτική*, the habit of which Aristotle pronounces ethical virtue.<sup>1</sup> Where these conditions are not complied with, there can be no government worthy of the name: men may be controlled as brutes or trampled on as slaves, but they are not governed; their conduct is not regulated by authority exercised through the medium of law.

2. Such are the elemental notions involved in our being under government: we have only to combine them with the idea of the end of government being *moral*, i.e. the production of goodness and the prevention of vice and moral evil, to arrive at a just conception of moral government.

(1.) Here we have (*a*) Law inculcating moral goodness and threatening penalties if vice or immorality be indulged in; (*b*) Authority enacting moral law, assuring all placed under it of its

<sup>1</sup> *Nicom. Eth.*, vi. 2.



permanency, and enforcing obedience by the infliction of the penalties incurred by disobedience; and (c) Activity on the part of the subjects who are capable of choosing between one course of action and another, who can know what is the course prescribed and the penalty of turning from it, and who are free from any extrinsic power that would prevent their following that course.

On these principles the moral government of God proceeds. As supreme Ruler, He has enacted a law under which all His intelligent creatures are placed. This law is holy, just, and good, the expression of His own holy and righteous nature, and its tendency is to sustain and advance goodness, and to suppress evil in those subject to it. It is a law which expresses the Author's approbation of what is morally good, His disapprobation of evil in all its forms, and His determination to uphold good and suppress evil in His domain. It is given by Him to His subjects as a decisive rule of action to them, inflexible in its requirements and clear in its directions.

(2.) This law, issued by authority, is enforced by sanctions. A law implies a lawgiver who has the right to impose laws on others, and power to enforce obedience to the laws he has made. Moral government implies a moral Governor who aims at the production of moral results, and the promotion of moral effects as the end of His administration. His influence is the influence of authority for moral results. Hence the law which He promulgates must have sanctions, *i.e.* must have attached to it natural good as the reward of obedience, and natural evil as the penalty of disobedience. Such sanctions indicate and establish the authority of the Governor by whom the law is appointed and enforced; and they are the only things which are or can be sanctions of law. A ruler may lay down for his subjects the best rule of action, and he may commend this to them by counsel and by the perfect accordance with it of his own conduct; but unless he make natural good to follow on obedience, and natural evil on disobedience, on their part, his law will have no adequate sanction, and his authority will be set aside. Natural good and evil as legal sanctions furnish decisive evidence of the Governor's authority. The law He enacts reveals His moral character, and the sanctions He annexes to it manifest His essential

regard to what is good and right, and His abhorrence of what is evil and wrong. They show the full strength of His will fixed on securing, as far as may be, the best end by the surest means, and for preventing, as far as may be, by legitimate means all evil ends. They remove all doubt and uncertainty as to the intention of the Ruler in appointing the law ; they proclaim His authority, and certify not only that it is *desirable* that His subjects should render obedience to His injunctions, but that an *obligation* rests on them to this ; and thus they tend to secure the confidential homage and unqualified submission of the subjects, and with these the felicity and glory of His kingdom.

In the kingdom of God law is sanctioned by the rewards which are attached to obedience, and the punishments which follow on disobedience. It is by means of these that the influence of the divine authority is brought to bear on those who are His subjects, so as to induce them to the pursuit and practice of virtue and the avoidance of evil. It is not necessary that the rewards and punishments should be external and physical ; all that is required is that pleasure or happiness should attend on obedience, and pain and misery be the consequent of disobedience. Without inducements of this kind it is not easy to see how intelligent and free agents could be ruled into goodness and virtue. No doubt if the will were always under a constraining bias to goodness, if there were no motives inducing to evil, or if the habit of virtue were so formed that it had become a second nature, there might be moral government without the use of rewards and punishments ; and probably there are spheres of God's dominion where this state of things exists, and creatures to whom He manifests Himself only under the character of infinite benevolence. But the character under which He appears to us, and under which we have to do with Him, is that of a righteous Governor ; and as a Governor it is by rewards and punishments that His government is administered. The use of rewards is to stimulate to obedience ; the use of punishments is to deter from disobedience. Neither of them can directly produce goodness or make a being virtuous ; they can only induce to goodness and deter from evil. Some, indeed, seem to have the notion that men may be made good by chastisement ; that if the chastisement be sufficiently severe

and long continued, the evil will be purged out of the man, and goodness will come in its place. This is a flagrant mistake. Suffering is natural evil, and natural evil can never produce moral good. Chastisement inflicted on a culprit may deter him from repeating his offence, but it can never directly reform him and make him good. "We punish the transgressor," says Plato, "that he may not again transgress, neither he himself nor any other who witnesses his being punished."<sup>1</sup> This is the true theory of punishment. And so, on the other hand, of rewards. Men are not made good by rewarding them for good actions; this can only induce them to adhere to the good course, and encourage others to adopt and pursue it. And as this is the end of government, it is by rewards and punishments that all government is to be carried on.

(3.) But if government is to be administered by a distribution of rewards and punishments, it is necessary, as required by equity, that the subjects of the government should be made aware beforehand both of what they are required to do, and of the consequences of obedience on the one hand, and disobedience on the other. Where no law is enacted and promulgated, and where no notice is given beforehand to the subjects of the consequences to them of obedience or disobedience, the government becomes a tyranny, and the subjects of it are reduced from the position of free moral agents to that of mere passive subjects of caprice and physical force. Where no law is promulgated there can be no obedience, and where the subjects are left in ignorance of what will ensue to them in case of compliance on the one hand with any law, and of transgression on the other, the proper motives to obedience are withheld, and in this case there is no moral government, no government of moral agents to a moral end.

Now God as Moral Governor has made known to His subjects the law which is to regulate their conduct, and has clearly intimated to them the consequences that will ensue on their obedience or their disobedience to its injunctions. Not only by formal proclamation, but by what the apostle calls the law written in their hearts, the law of conscience, that law which, as Cicero says, is above all laws, He has

<sup>1</sup> *Protag.*, 324.

taught men what is required of them; and not by formal promises and denunciations only, but also by the whole course of His dealings with men, and especially by connecting happiness with virtue, and suffering with vice. He has given men warning beforehand of what will ensue on the keeping, and what will ensue on the neglect or the transgression of His law. "In the present state," as Butler remarks, "all which we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is put in our own power. For pleasure and pain are the consequences of our actions; and we are endued by the Author of our nature with capacities of foreseeing their consequences. . . . I know not," he continues, "that we have any one kind or degree of enjoyment but by means of our own actions. And by prudence and care we may for the most part pass our days in tolerable ease and quiet; or, on the contrary, we may by rashness, ungoverned passion, wilfulness, or even by negligence, make ourselves as miserable as ever we please. And many do please to make themselves extremely miserable, *i.e.* to do what they know beforehand will render them so. They follow those ways, the fruit of which they know by instruction, example, experience, will be disgrace, and poverty, and sickness, and untimely death. This every one observes to be the general course of things."<sup>1</sup> God has thus, even in the course of nature, taught men that His law cannot be transgressed with impunity; and as vice is punished as vice by being followed by suffering, and virtue rewarded as virtue by being productive of happiness, His government is sure to be a moral government—a government directed to the securing of moral ends by the motive-influence of authority over free moral agents who have the keeping of their own welfare very much in their own power. That whilst he that doth these things which the Law prescribes shall live in them, they that transgress receive in themselves that recompense of their error which is meet, are principles not only enunciated in the Bible, but proclaimed by the whole experience of our race as under the government of Him who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, and will by no means clear the guilty.

(4.) From what has been advanced it will be seen that to be under God's moral government, and to be in a state of

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part I., ch. ii.

probation before Him, are almost equivalent statements. They have even been represented as identical. Strictly speaking, however, they are not so ; there is between them this difference, that probation implies exposure to difficulties and temptations in the way of obedience, whilst moral government may be sustained where none such exist. In the heavenly state God's moral government subsists in absolute perfection ; over all its blessed occupants His law reigns, and they serve Him with a service that is never interrupted or impaired. But they serve Him without fear. No temptation threatens their fidelity ; no obstacle impedes their service. It is otherwise with man in the present state. Here our state is one of trial. We are subjects of a great experiment. We are under probation. And for us practically this is identical with being under moral government.

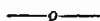
(5.) Where government is conducted by law it is essential to the preservation of order and the maintenance of rule that, where the penalty of the law has been incurred by disobedience, it shall be certainly inflicted. On this all writers on jurisprudence are agreed, and some have even maintained that certainty of punishment is more effectual for this end than severity of punishment. And with justice ; for, however severe be the penalty denounced, if there is any considerable probability that it may be escaped, the threatening of it will have little effect in deterring from transgression. But though the sequence of punishment on transgression be made certain, it is not necessary that it should be immediate ; there may be reasons rendering it expedient to delay for a season the infliction of a penalty that has been incurred ; and from such delay no harm will accrue to the government provided it remain certain that in due time the penalty shall be inflicted. It is also compatible with good and stable government that on a certain condition the penalty may be wholly remitted, and the offender be pardoned. That one condition is the rendering of an adequate compensation to the law for the violation of it which has occurred. If the transgressor himself, or some other for him, can by some means—say the payment of a fine or the rendering of some important service to the State—so make up to the law, as it were, what it has lost by the transgression of the offender, that its authority

shall be recognised and upheld, then with perfect safety may the offence be remitted, and the transgressor be forgiven. But it is of necessity that some such satisfaction must be made ere transgression can be forgiven. Where forgiveness is extended to the transgressor without this, the government ceases to be government by law. A mob may rescue a criminal from punishment, or an autocrat may extend his protection to some favourite who has transgressed, or under some sudden impulse may avert the blow which ought to descend on the transgressor; but this is government by physical force, or arbitrary power, or individual caprice, not government by law. Where law reigns and government is administered by law, the only possible means by which a transgressor can obtain pardon and escape punishment is by the offering for him, either by himself or by another, of such a compensation or atonement as will uphold the authority of the law and the dignity of the government under which the transgression has been committed.

These principles are fully recognised and acted on in the moral government of God, which is, as we have seen, government by law. There the punishment of sin, which is a transgression of law, is certain. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," is God's own solemn assurance that there is no impunity for the sinner; and though sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, men are warned that their sin shall certainly find them out, and the penalty they have incurred by their sin shall certainly be endured unless their sin be forgiven by God. And that there may be forgiveness for the transgressor, the one condition without which there can be no forgiveness, viz. the offering of an atonement for transgression, has been provided for. On this it is unnecessary here to enlarge. The Son of God has made propitiation for the sins of the world, and on the ground of His propitiation God forgives sin in perfect consistency with the claims of His government and law. How propitiation could be made for sin, man, antecedent to the revelation of the divine plan, could not have discovered; but now that it is made known, we can see how entirely it is in accordance with a system of righteous moral government.

## PART II.

### ANTHROPOLOGY.



#### CHAPTER I.

##### FIRST DIVISION.—ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

##### I. CREATION OF MAN.

WE now enter upon the second of the main divisions of our subject, ANTHROPOLOGY, or THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING MAN.

Man is the creature of God ; and the Bible not only affirms this, but in its earlier chapters gives a detailed account of the original formation of man, and the condition in which he was placed when he entered on the stage of being. Having first arranged the earth, and called into being the various plants and animals which occupy its surface, and having prepared for man a fitting and pleasant habitation, God brought man into existence. In doing this He proceeded with more of form and solemnity than He had used in the preceding steps of His work. Instead of merely giving the command to exist, instead of merely summoning into being by an almighty fiat, or calling on the earth to bring forth the creature He was about to frame, God, as if to mark the singular importance of the act He was about to perform, stirs up Himself, as it were, to a higher exercise of His creative energy, and marks this as in a peculiar sense the work of His hands. "And God said," we read, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness" (Gen. i. 26) ; and in a subsequent record we are told that "God *formed* man,"—that is, shaped, fashioned, elaborated him with care, as a potter does a vessel, or an

artist a statue, the verb used being יָצַר, which is the word used of the working of the potter (Isa. lxiv. 7) and of the artist (Isa. xliv. 9, 12, liv. 17). The material of which man was thus formed is described as "of the dust of the earth;" and when thus formed, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). All this indicates deliberation and care on the part of the Creator in the formation of man, as if He gave special consideration to this, and took special pains to make His work perfect, doing it with His own hand, and proceeding in it step by step until it was complete.

i. When it is said that God formed man from the dust of the earth, it is not necessarily implied that the Creator took of the moistened dust or clay of the earth and formed out of it a statue in the form of man. This may have been; but all that the words oblige us to believe is that the body of man is composed of the same elements as the dust of the ground. Man's body is thus, as the apostle expresses it, "of the earth earthy" (1 Cor. xv. 47). The constituent elements of the human body are the four principal gases, with lime, potash, and a little iron, sodium, and phosphorus, the commonest elements in the inorganic kingdom. As respects his body, man is thus part and parcel of the material creation, differing from the lower animals and the vegetable world only in form, position, and capacity. The material of his body is not different in kind nor finer in nature than that of theirs. The same structure of bone and tissue and nerve which anatomy discloses in man it unfolds in the lower animals: the different processes by which the animal body is preserved, and by which it decays, are the same in both; and with an almost endless diversity of outward form, there is yet such an analogy between the parts of the bodily frame in man and in the lower animals, that we are conducted by an exact process of observation and induction to the conclusion that all animal forms are but variations of one primitive type, from which the Creator has in each instance departed only in so far as was necessary to fit the animal for the place it had to occupy and the functions it had to discharge,—a generalization which has been proclaimed as one of the achievements of modern science, but which was not unknown to the ancients, as the following



sentence of Augustine shows: "Nullum est creaturæ genus quod non in homine possit agnoscī." <sup>1</sup>

But though man is thus associated by his material structure with the lower animals, he is yet, even in respect of this part of his nature, the greatest of God's terrestrial works. In the erectness of his posture, in the sublimity of his look, in the symmetry of his form, in the delicacy of his organs, in the beauty of his complexion, in the refinement of his senses, and in the sensibility which is diffused over his whole frame, he possesses advantages to which none of the lower animals can lay claim. Nor are these advantages the result of culture and progressive development. Even those who would trace man back to the ape are compelled to admit that the oldest specimens of human beings which have been discovered not only exhibit no approach to the ape type, but are physically as perfect as any which the most advanced age of civilisation can furnish. Even Mr. Huxley says of one of the oldest fossil skeletons that has been brought to light, that the brain might have been that of a philosopher; and Professor Dana, an eminent American geologist, says: "No remains of fossil man bear evidence to less perfect erectness of structure than in civilised man, or to any nearer approach to the man-ape in essential characteristics. The existing man-apes," he continues, "belong to lines that reached up to them as their ultimatum; but of that time which is supposed to have reached upward to man, not the first link below the lowest level of existing man has been found." <sup>2</sup> The absence of all intermediate links between the anthropoid ape and the lowest type of man is pronounced by Mr. Darwin to be amazing; and doubtless it is to him and his fellow-evolutionists as perplexing as it is amazing, for it is fatal to their whole theory of the origin of man.

ii. After the formation of man from the dust of the earth, the next step in the creation process was the infusing into his frame of life: "The Lord God," we are told, "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). By some this last expression has been taken to mean that

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Oros.*, quoted by Klee, *Katholische Dogmatik*, ii. 232.

<sup>2</sup> *Geology*, p. 603, 2nd ed. quoted by Rev. Joseph Cook in *Monday Lectures*, ii. 5.

man was then endowed with his highest and most distinctive quality, that of mind or spirit. The phrase, however, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, cannot be taken as referring to the mind or spiritual part of man. It is the same phrase which in Gen. i. 20 is rendered "the creature that hath life;" in ver. 24, and ii. 19, ix. 12, 15, 16, "living creature;" and i. 30, "the breath of life," in all which passages it is used of the lower animals, or of the animal creation as such in the general. "The expression, therefore," to use the words of Dr. Pye Smith, "sets before us the organic life of the animal frame, that mysterious something which man cannot create nor restore, which baffles the most acute philosophers to search out its nature, and which reason combines with Scripture to refer to the immediate agency of the Almighty." It is thus something common to man and the lower animals. There is, however, this to be noted, that whilst the lower animals had their life, like the plants, from the earth by the divine word of power (Gen. i. 20), the life of man was conveyed into him by a special act of the divine inbreathing. Life in man is thus something higher than life in the lower animals; it is something divine, and is given to and sustained in man by the direct agency of God: "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28).

It is further to be noted here that life is something distinct from organization—something that is neither identical with it nor flows directly out of it. When God had formed man, his organization was perfect; nothing more needed to be added to it; nothing more was added to it. But there his body lay inert, senseless, motionless, in nothing differing from the inorganic masses around it save in its greater symmetry. Something more was required ere that body could live; and that was supplied by God when He breathed into that senseless organism the breath of life. Life, therefore, is the immediate gift of God, a boon which He bestows, withholds, or resumes as He sees meet.

iii. When God purposed to create man, He purposed to form him in His own image—according to His likeness: "Let us make man," said He, "in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. i. 26), and accordingly in the image of God man was created. This is what constitutes man's supreme dignity, gives him his chief worth, and raises him far above all the rest of the animal

creation. This is affirmed of man alone of all God's creatures. The physical universe is spoken of as God's thought (Ps. xcii. 5), as founded by His wisdom (Prov. iii. 19), as illustrating His perfections and declaring His glory (Ps. viii., xix. 1-5), and as evidencing to the intelligent mind of man the invisible things of God (τὰ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ), "even His eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. i. 20). We find the sun also set forth as the emblem of God, and light as the emblem of His intelligence, purity, and glory (Ps. lxxxiv. 11, civ. 2; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 John i. 5); but the sun is nowhere said to have been formed in His image, nor is His likeness to be found in the light. It is not even of angels said that they have been formed in the image and likeness of God; though, as they are called "sons of God," they must to a certain extent at least bear the image and likeness of Him whose sons they are. The special ascription of this to man may indicate that in him the divine image, and by consequence the divine sonship, inheres in a higher degree than even in angels; and this falls in with what other intimations lead us to conclude that man, as respects his original constitution, possesses a nature higher than the angelic, even as in his regenerated and glorified state he is destined to a higher position and dignity than theirs. This much at any rate we are justified in drawing from this consideration, that in the possession by man in his creation of God's image and likeness lies his supreme distinction and glory.

Man, it is said, was made in the image of God. But when God purposed to create him, He said, "Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness," בְּצַלְמֵנוּ בְּדְמוּתֵנוּ. A twofold model was thus proposed for man's formation. There is a distinction here which it is important to observe. The distinction lies not in the nouns צֶלֶם and דְּמוּת, for these two are quite synonymous; it lies in the prepositions prefixed to them, the one of which indicates that there is a certain form in which man was actually made, the other that there is a model or norm according to which he was made. The latter expression is not merely, as Oehler suggests, intended "to fix and strengthen the meaning" of the former, nor merely to "express that the divine image which man bears is really one corresponding to the original pattern."<sup>1</sup> It rather, as Dorner

<sup>1</sup> *Theology of the Old Testament*, i. 211.

remarks, "points to the future"—to what man was *destined* to become in the full development of his higher nature. "In reference to what he possesses already" (to quote again from Dorner), "he is created in the divine image as his model; but in reference to the chief matter—his destination—he has in God a norm and ideal."<sup>1</sup>

Keeping this in view, we can understand how man, even after the fall, is described as being in the image of God, as he is in Gen. ix. 6. Notwithstanding his sin and fall, man still retained that *in* which he had been formed, though he had fallen away from that normal perfection for which he was originally destined. We can see also why nowhere in Scripture is the state in which Adam was in Paradise presented as that to which man is to aspire, and to which redeemed man shall be raised. Adam never attained to that likeness after which he was created. In Christ alone, the second Adam, was the perfect image of God realized; and it is to Christ, therefore, we are taught to look as the realized ideal of perfect humanity, and to conformity to Him that we are called to aspire. When Adam begat a son, he begat him in his own image and likeness; and so all men, descended from him, who was of the earth earthy, bear the image of the earthy. Only through Christ can we be brought to bear the image of the heavenly; only through Him can we attain to God-likeness, and so reach the grand end for which man was originally destined.

The divine image in which and after which man was formed was thus, as Dorner remarks, "partly original *endowment*, partly *destination*."<sup>2</sup> But let us now inquire more particularly what is to be understood by the divine image in which man was made? It may help us to a satisfactory decision on this point if we look at the way in which the word "image" is used in the Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures the word so rendered is *צֶלֶם*, and in the Greek of the N. T. it is *εἰκών*. Both are generally used in the sense of a representation of some object by means of that which resembles it, or is supposed to resemble it; but both also occur in the sense of a model or archetype according to which something else is formed. Thus Adam is said to have begotten "a son in his

<sup>1</sup> *System of Christian Doctrine*, ii. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

own likeness, after his image " (בְּדְמוּתוֹ כִּפְעֻלָּמוֹ), Gen. v. 3), that is, according to the model of himself. So the apostle speaks of believers being "conformed to the image" of the Son of God (Rom. viii. 9), *i.e.* to Him as the model of all excellence; of their beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, and being changed into the same image (2 Cor. iii. 18), and of the new man which believers are to put on as being renewed after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10). This last passage indicates the sense in which the word "image" is used when man is said to have been created in the image of God; in God Himself was found the model or archetype after which man was formed. Man is not the image of God in the sense in which Jesus Christ is who is "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3); but being made *after* or *according to* God's image, man is in a sense the image of God, and is called by the apostle His image and glory (1 Cor. xi. 7).

But it still remains to inquire, In what sense was man formed after the model of God? In other words, what was that archetype of which man was made to be the ectype or representation? Now, there are three ways in which one intelligent being may be the model of another: he may be so as respects substance or nature; he may be so by analogy of constitution; he may be so by moral resemblance. Of these the first is excluded in the case before us by the nature of the case; no mere creature ever can be either consubstantial with God or of like substance with Him; this belongs only to a Being who could say, as Christ says, "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30). But neither of the other two is incompatible with the conditions of creature-being; and it is in the combination of them that we find the just and full explanation of the statement we are considering. Man was made after the image of God, inasmuch as in constitution he was made analogous to God, and as in character he resembled God.

"God is a Spirit." This is our highest conception of God, so far at least as He may be conceived by us. Positively we may not be able to say what spirit properly and absolutely is; but negatively and by way of comparison we can arrive at a just and clear thought on this point, and hence may form a representation in our minds of the Most High. We are

taught, moreover, to regard Him as possessing certain attributes, both intellectual and moral, and, further, as a Being who has revealed Himself to us we ascribe to Him a certain character, and think of Him as exhibiting certain qualities appropriate to a perfect moral and spiritual nature. This is the representation we form of God when we think of Him aright, and after this, as a model and archetype, man was originally formed. He was constituted an intelligent and moral agent, possessing a spiritual nature distinct from his material organization analogous to the spirituality of God, and exhibiting a character, mental and moral, resembling that of God. Man received from his Maker a spiritual nature which constitutes properly himself—his proper personality; he was endowed with capacities of intelligence and moral judgment; his mind was pure and his affections holy; and his character was wholly in accordance with that of God. God made man upright. There was no flaw, no defect, no blot on any part of his nature. As he stood before his Creator, perfect in every limb, fair in every feature, with the light of intelligence beaming from his countenance, and the beauty of perfect innocence and the crown of unsullied purity shining upon him, the eye of God rested on him with complacency, and the voice of God pronounced him "good."

By some of the ancient Fathers it was held that by man's being made after the image of God nothing more is meant than that as God is over all, so man is like Him set over all things here below; as God is the Lord of the universe, so man is the lord of that part of the universe in which he has been placed; and this view has been adopted by not a few in more recent times. But in the narrative of Moses the placing of man over the lower creation is represented as a *different* thing from his being made in the image of God; the one is the consequent of the other; man has authority over the creatures around him, *because* he was made after the image of God. To make these two identical is to confound man's title to sovereignty with the grounds on which it rests.

Others of the Fathers took the more comprehensive view of the import of this phrase; they place the divine image in which man was created in the intelligent and self-governing nature with which man has been endowed (τὸ νοερὸν καὶ

αὐτεξοίστου), as comprehending, therefore, intelligence as well as moral purity. It has been too common with evangelical divines to restrict it to the latter of these. That conformity to the divine character and holiness forms an essential part of that image in which man was formed, cannot be doubted. The Apostle Paul, in describing the restoration of man as fallen to the image of God, describes it as a being created anew in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv. 24). But to restrict the phrase to this meaning is a mistake. The apostle in another passage speaks of the new man in believers being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10), so that he regarded intelligence as well as moral purity as included in the image of God in which man was framed. And as Scripture continues to speak of man as still retaining the divine image after the fall, as when, for instance, murder is forbidden on the ground that man is in the image of God, and calumny is on the same ground denounced as a heinous sin, and man is on this ground represented as still holding dominion over the lower creation; and as we know that by the fall man lost his moral resemblance to God,—we can understand such statements only by regarding the image of God after which man was formed as relating to both moral character and mental constitution. The former of these man lost by the fall; the latter he retains, and with it his authority over the lower creation and all the responsibility which such an endowment entails. Sin, indeed, has tarnished and enfeebled this part of man's nature also, but not to such an extent as to require his being created anew before this part of the divine image is restored to him.

(i.) Man being thus formed after the image and in the likeness of God, has in him the element and principle of an endless life. "Since life in fellowship with God is by its nature an imperishable and eternal life, and since man was formed for this, and this was from the beginning fundamentally existent in him, it follows that immortality is something belonging to the original nature of man. It is true that it is said that God alone hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16); but this does not contradict the above. For though God alone bears in Himself the power of endless life, He yet

bestows this on man inasmuch as He originally communicated to man the basis of immortality, and made him for an endless life. Hence we may truly say that immortality belongs to the nature of man."<sup>1</sup> Man has not immortality absolutely as his; but he has it so in the constitution God has given him that it is against his nature to cease to be.

(ii.) Man being made after the image and likeness of God, it is not surprising that God, in revealing Himself to him, should represent Himself anthropomorphically. It is not merely in accommodation to human modes of thought that God thus represents Himself. This may be the case with such representations as ascribe to God parts and passions, or as present Him as sitting on a throne, or walking, or handling, and such like. But it is not so with those representations which ascribe to Him the acts and affections of our spiritual nature. These are not mere figures. There is a sense in which God does think and feel; not, indeed, exactly as we do, but in a manner analogous to ours. As thought is to us, so is what is called thought in God to Him; and so of anger, joy, love, and other mental affections ascribed to Him; these all indicate something in Him analogous to, though not identical with, what they are in us. Now, this analogy rests for its basis on the fact that man was made, as respects his spiritual nature, in the likeness and after the image of God. The analogy holds good,—is a reality and not a mere rhetorical figure,—because in God Himself is that according to which man was originally made. God speaks to us of Himself after the manner of man, because man was originally made after the manner of God.

(iii.) Man being made originally after the image of God, has in him the natural fitness to become a son of God. So Adam is called in Scripture (Luke iii. 38) in virtue of his creation; and correspondent to this God, because He has created man, stands to him in the relation of a Father (Mal. ii. 10; comp. Acts xvii. 28). This relation has been put in abeyance by man's sin. But it has not been annihilated. Man still retains the natural capacity to become a child of God; he has but to return to his allegiance and be at peace with God to find himself restored to his primordial place among

<sup>1</sup> Hahn, *Theol. d. N. T.*, p. 389.



the sons of God. When by faith in Christ he becomes united to Him, he enters with and through Him into a state of sonship: to as many as receive Him, God gives the right (*ἐξουσία*, that which *ἐξέσται*, is allowed, permitted, authorized) or privilege to become the sons of God (John i. 12). No new faculties, no new capacities, are given to them; they are simply restored to their proper place by that which deprived them of their privileges and that which hindered their return to God being taken away.

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## CHAPTER II.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### II. THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

In reading Scripture it may be held by us as a safe general rule, that beyond the sphere which limits the special objects for which Scripture, as a revelation from God, was given to men, we are not to expect infallible instruction, nor to be surprised or disturbed should we find statements which we are compelled to regard as not in exact accordance with a more advanced state of knowledge than that attained by the society in the midst of which the sacred writers moved and for which they wrote. In all matters pertaining to religion, whether dogmatical statements of divine truth or practical instruction respecting worship and moral conduct, or the record of the fates and progress of the Church of God on earth, we may expect to find the most perfect accuracy, for these are points on which it is the professed design of the Bible to give infallible direction. But on points on which the sacred writers touch only incidentally, or to which they refer only as casually lying in their way as they pass on to their peculiar theme, we have no reason to expect that equal care will be shown to avoid mistaken or partial statements. It was no part of the design of the sacred writers to give the world instruction on these points, and we should not deal with them as if this formed part of their design. Of this

sort are their references in Scripture to natural phenomena or questions of philosophic speculation. To set the world right on such points formed no part of the direct design of Holy Scripture. Hence the writers of Scripture spoke on such points as the people around them spoke, often with very imperfect knowledge, sometimes even erroneously. This should not disturb us, and we should as little labour to force the statements of Scripture into accordance with the doctrines of the advanced science of modern times, as we should allow ourselves to be troubled by the invidious zeal of the enemy of revelation in collecting and pointing out the deficiencies, in a scientific point of view, of the sacred writers. These statements have an archaeological interest as indicating the amount and kind of knowledge possessed by the ancient Hebrews regarding natural phenomena and subjects of scientific speculation; and it is interesting to observe how even here the Bible maintains its superiority over all works of contemporary authorship, the cosmology and natural science of the Bible being almost as far superior to what we find in the traditions of other nations as it falls below the discoveries of modern times. Even here we may directly recognise an indication of the superintending hand of God in the composition of this book; for it is certainly very remarkable that the sacred writers whilst, on the one hand, not going beyond the intelligence of the men of their own day by anticipating the scientific discoveries of a later age, should invariably express themselves in a way which commits them to none of those gross physiological and cosmological errors and absurdities with which heathen writers, when they touch on such points, abound. To keep men from making gross blunders on subjects of which they are ignorant, as much demands the agency of a supernatural power as to guide them to state truth in words they were unable to understand. And in a series of writings, the design of which is to teach religious truth, not to anticipate scientific discovery, this is all we have any right to expect, even though the whole series and every word of it be given by inspiration of God.

There is one department, however, of philosophic research so closely connected with the main purport of the Bible that we may expect to find the sacred writers to do more than

incidentally touch upon it, and may anticipate that what they say on it will bear the test of scientific scrutiny. I refer to the natural constitution of man as God's creature. By the constitution God has given him man is fitted for the purposes God designs him to serve, for being acted upon by that discipline through which it is God's will he should pass, and for being profited by that provision which God has made for his spiritual and eternal welfare; and as these are matters pertaining to the very substance of religion, we expect that the Bible will have something to *teach* us concerning man's constitution as a being capable of religious relations and of being affected by religious interests.

We have already considered the account which Moses gives of the creation of man, and of the endowment he received at the hand of his Creator when he came forth at His command. In what was said regarding the creation of man, our view was chiefly historical and simply expository. I propose to follow up that summary by an attempt at a more scientific analysis and compend of what Scripture teaches generally concerning the nature and constitution of man.

The most general statement which the Bible gives concerning man's nature is that he is a being consisting of body and spirit. For body (*σῶμα*) we sometimes have flesh (*בשר*, *σάρξ*), and for spirit (*πνεῦμα*) we sometimes have soul (*ψυχή*), and sometimes we have the combination body, soul, and spirit. All are agreed that "body" and "flesh" are synonymous terms, the former describing the material part of man in its organic totality, the latter describing it with reference to its constitutive substance or its characteristic affections. But opinions differ as to the terms used to designate the immaterial part of man, some regarding soul and spirit as essentially distinct, others viewing them as designations of the same object viewed under different aspects and relations. Hence has arisen the question: Does the Bible represent the nature of man as consisting of *two* parts or of *three*? or, as it is sometimes expressed, Is the Biblical analysis of man's nature a *Dichotomy* or a *Trichotomy*?

i. This question can be answered only by attending to the usage of the words translated "soul" and "spirit" in Scripture. If we find them used interchangeably or synonymously,

we shall then conclude that the Scripture doctrine of man's nature is a dichotomy; and if, on the other hand, we find them used so distinctively as to indicate that the sacred writers regarded the soul as a different part of man's nature from the spirit, we shall then be constrained to regard their doctrine as a trichotomy.

It is impossible for us here to examine in detail all the passages of Scripture in which these words occur in reference to man. Nor is this necessary. It is enough if we can adduce crucial instances on either side—that is to say, instances which agree with the one hypothesis, but are utterly irreconcilable with the other. By such instances the hypothesis with which they are irreconcilable is thereby excluded.

Now, we find that the terms soul and spirit are constantly used so as to exclude the supposition that they denote essentially different parts of man's nature.

(i.) In the first place, we find soul and spirit used indifferently as the antithesis to body or flesh. Thus (Rom. viii. 10) the apostle says, "The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness;" in 1 Cor. v. 3 he speaks of being "absent in body but present in spirit;" in 1 Cor. vi. 20 he exhorts believers to glorify God "in their body and in their spirit;" comp. also vii. 34; Eph. iv. 4; Jas. ii. 26. In all these passages spirit evidently denotes simply the higher, the immaterial part of man as distinguished from the lower, the material. But we find "soul" used in the very same way. Thus our Lord says, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. x. 28); of the Messiah it is predicted that His soul should not be left in Sheol or Hades, neither should His flesh see corruption (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 31); and in 1 Pet. ii. 11 the apostle contrasts the soul with those fleshly lusts which war against it. In these passages soul evidently denotes, not a particular part of man's inner nature, but that nature itself, and as such, just as in the former spirit is used. But had there been an essential distinction between soul and spirit, they would not have been used thus indifferently to denote the same object.

(ii.) Soul and spirit are used as parallel with each other. Thus Mary in her song says: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke

i. 47). As this song is constructed on the principle of the Hebrew parallelism, we must regard soul and spirit here as synonymous, different names of the same thing.

(iii.) The same qualities, acts, and emotions are ascribed to the soul and to the spirit. Thus, Jesus is said to have sighed deeply in His spirit (Mark viii. 12), to have groaned in His spirit and been troubled (John xi. 33), to be troubled in His spirit (xiii. 21); and so also we read that His soul was exceeding sorrowful (Matt. xxvi. 38), that His soul was troubled (John xii. 27); and we read elsewhere of the spirit being refreshed and of the soul being in prosperity, etc. (2 Cor. vii. 13; 3 John 2). We have also the apostle speaking of his spirit being refreshed (1 Cor. xvi. 18, etc.), and in Matt. xi. 29 the same expression is used of the soul. Again, what in one place is called "filthiness of the spirit" (2 Cor. vii. 1), is in another described as lusts that war against the soul (1 Pet. ii. 11). Objects to which the same qualities and susceptibilities are thus ascribed cannot with any propriety be regarded as specifically distinct and different.

(iv.) In reference to salvation we have the phrase "to save the soul," and the phrase "to save the spirit," both used without any perceptible difference of meaning (comp. 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. x. 39; Jas. v. 20, with 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 5); and so, on the other side, we read of perdition as a killing of the soul, a losing of the soul, whilst salvation is set forth as living according to God in the spirit (1 Pet. iv. 6). It is evidently of one and the same object that these things are said.

(v.) The departed are spoken of sometimes as souls and sometimes as spirits. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades" (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27, 31); John saw under the altar the souls of those that had been slain for the word of God (Rev. vi. 9), and the souls of them that had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus (xx. 4). On the other hand, when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea they thought they had seen a spirit (Luke xxiv. 37, 39); the Sadducees say that there is neither angel nor spirit (Acts xxiii. 8); believers are come to the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. xii. 23); Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 18). It is evident from these instances that the im-

material and immortal part of man may be designated either soul or spirit.

(vi.) Death is sometimes called a giving up of the spirit and sometimes a giving up of the soul, as restored life is spoken of as a returning of the soul, or the soul being still in a man (comp. Matt. xxvii. 50 ; John xix. 30 ; Acts vii. 59, with John x. 17 ; Acts xx. 10 ; Gen. xxxv. 18 ; 1 Kings xvii. 21).

(vii.) God, who is emphatically a "Spirit" (comp. John iv. 24, and this frequently-recurring phrase "Spirit of God," or "God the Spirit"), speaks also of Himself as a soul (Matt. xii. 18 ; Heb. x. 3).

(viii.) In fine, as men when they agree are said to be of "one soul" (Acts iv. 32 ; Phil. i. 27), so the believer in union with the Lord is said to be joined to Him in "one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17) ; and believers who are exhorted to stand "in one spirit," are in the same connection admonished to strive together "in one soul" (Phil. i. 17).

With these instances before us of the free interchange and synonymous usage of the words soul and spirit in Scripture, it is vain to attempt to maintain that they designate radically distinct parts of human nature ; in other words, that soul is different from the spirit, in the same sense as the body is different from both. We must therefore hold by a dichotomy as the scriptural view of man's constitution : he consists of body and soul, or of body and spirit.<sup>1</sup>

ii. But whilst we cannot regard the soul and the spirit of man as numerically different, it would be an error on the other side were we to maintain that they are in no sense whatever to be distinguished from each other. As we have already seen that the material part of man may be indifferently called "body" or "flesh," and yet that these terms present that one object under different aspects, so in regard to the immaterial part of man, it may be called either soul or spirit, and yet in strict propriety these terms designate that object under different aspects, or in respect of different characteristics.

Every one must feel that there are certain connections in which it is more proper to use the one term rather than the

<sup>1</sup> "Impossibile est in uno homine esse plures animas per essentiam differentes, sed una tantum est anima intellectiva, quæ vegetativæ, et sensitivæ, et intellectivæ officiis fungitur." Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, P. i. qu. 76, a 3.

other. For instance, when the apostle says, "I serve God in the spirit," or when he speaks of praying in the spirit, or of the Divine Spirit witnessing with our spirit, etc., we feel that it would not be proper in such passages to substitute soul for spirit. Again, when our Lord speaks of a man losing his soul, or when we read of the redemption of the soul, we feel that it would quite alter the meaning were we to substitute spirit for soul. We find also the sacred writers sometimes using soul and spirit as distinct from each other, as, *e.g.*, when the word of God is said to divide soul and spirit (Heb. iv. 12), or when the apostle prays God to sanctify believers, body and soul and spirit. It is evident, then, that in some sense there is a difference between soul and spirit. In *what* this difference consists, however, it is by no means easy to say. If from nothing else, this is evident from the variety of answers which have been given to the question.

Thus Tholuck says on Heb. iv. 12, "According to our view *ψυχή* here denotes the faculty that goes out upon the sensible *πνεῦμα*, the faculty that is directed to the non-sensible;" and he regards this as the general though the invariable usage of these words as well as the corresponding Hebrew נֶפֶשׁ and רִיח. He would thus make the Biblical analysis of our mental constitution very much the same as that proposed by Locke, who ranks all mental phenomena under the two heads of sensation and reflection.

Delitzsch distinguishes them thus: "*πνεῦμα* is the creative life-principle in man as an immaterial agent, *ψυχή* is the same as an agent bound to matter; the latter has the idea of body inseparable from it, it is the *soul*, *i.e.* the spirit organically united to body;" and he adds, "The human soul stands related to the human spirit as the divine *δόξα* to the triune divine essence." So also, in reference to the Hebrew words, Oehler says: "רִיח is the name given to man's soul from its *substance*, which is the fountain of the body's life itself separate from the earthly material of the body; it is called נֶפֶשׁ, from the life which it has or had in the body and conjoined with the body; רִיח is that in the living being from which and by which it lives; נַפְשׁ is the being itself which lives."<sup>1</sup>

Nitzsch says: "The soul is the unity of spirit and body,

<sup>1</sup> *De V. T. Sentent. de rebus post mortem futuris*, p. 15.

the individual life, the finitude of the spirit. The concept of the individual, with its relation to spirituality and consequently to real personality, is afforded by the soul alone. It is the Ego construed in its universal first self-consciousness, in its universal definitiveness. But as human, not brutal, the soul is also spiritual, rational, capable of self-determination, and made and designed for this, in the concreated consciousness of dependence on God and freedom in God to go in and out as the sensuous emotion may give occasion."

These extracts, if they do not throw very much light on the subject, yet serve to show how difficult it is to enunciate in any clear and distinct manner the difference between the soul and the spirit of man. Perhaps all that can be safely said on the subject is that the spirit has primary and chief reference to that part of our inner nature which has to do with thought as thought, while the soul has respect rather to that part of our nature which occupies the ground common to body and mind, the region of sensation, appetite, and sensuous emotion.

iii. I proceed to make a few remarks on this inner nature of man, whether called soul or spirit, in order to bring out what the Bible teaches concerning it.

(i.) Various names are given to the inner nature of man viewed under different aspects. Thus it is called *νοῦς* in regard to its being the seat of knowledge and will (Rom. xiv. 5; Eph. iv. 23; Phil. iv. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 2); *διάνοια*, *ἐννοια*, *νοήματα*, and such like, with the same reference; and *καρδιά* as the personal seat and collocation of the entire mental energies and susceptibilities, whether of sensation, thought, or emotion (Matt. xii. 34, 35; Rom. viii. 27, ix. 2, x. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 5, xiv. 25; Eph. v. 19, etc.).

(ii.) In the soul or spirit lies the proper personality of each man. Each man has his own soul or spirit; to speak more exactly, *is* his own soul or spirit. The body is *his*, not *he*. Hence the Scriptures speak not only of the spirit as *within* the body, subsisting there as a distinct substance, but they identify the soul or spirit with the man himself. Thus St. Paul when he says, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord;" and again, "We are willing rather to



be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6, 8), evidently identifies himself with his soul as separate from his body; the soul is the *we* that are to be present with the Lord after its present home in the body is broken up; that which thinks, wills, and feels within us constitutes, according to the apostle, the real Ego, that which makes the proper being of the man.

(iii.) This soul or spirit is immortal,—not indeed essentially and by its own original propriety, for God alone hath immortality, and that which has begun to be can never absolutely and in itself rise above the possibility of ceasing to be; but by the divine grace and decree, *χάριτι τῆς τοῦ λόγου μετουσίᾱς*, as Athanasius expresses it. "God," says the book of the Wisdom of Solomon, "created man to be immortal; and made him to be an image of His own eternity" (ii. 23). This truth, indicated with varying degrees of clearness in many parts of the O. T., is enunciated with unqualified distinctness in the New. Comp. Matt. x. 28, xx. 32; John xii. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 32; 2 Cor. v. 1, etc.

Whilst, however, it is maintained that the soul is not necessarily and in itself immortal, but has received this from God, and holds it by His will and ordinance, it has, on the other hand, to be maintained that the soul has not in itself any principle of dissolution or cause of decay; so that it can cease to exist only by a special act of the divine power. This must ever present a serious objection to the doctrine of annihilation; for unless proof can be adduced that God directly puts forth His power to destroy the soul He has put into man, the presumption is that it continues to exist though separated from the body at death. "It is probable had man not fallen, that after a continuance in the earthly state for a period of probation adapted to effect the best and most useful exercise of all His physical, intellectual, and moral faculties, each individual would have been translated (as Enoch?) to an eternal confirmation of holiness and happiness, in a higher condition of existence."<sup>1</sup>

iv. A question has been raised as to the way in which the succession of souls is kept up; and at one time this furnished occasion for keen discussion among theologians. Three different views have been advanced on this point.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J. Pye Smith, *Theology*, p. 357.

(i.) That each soul descends from a *pre-existent* state and enters into the body, which, by natural processes, has been prepared for it. This doctrine, which seems to have been honoured from Plato's idea of an *ἀνάμνησις*, was held by the Jewish writer Philo, and, among the Christian Fathers, by Origen. It was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 543. Strange to say, it has found in recent times an advocate in Kant, who, in order to account for the radical evil which he was obliged to admit is to be found in man, adduces the fact of a pre-existent state in which man was evil, and from which the soul came bearing the taint of its former state. Other German writers have espoused this idea, and even Julius Müller seems to favour it in order to account for original sin. A strenuous advocate of it has appeared in Mr. Beecher, an American divine; and something like it seems to have been in the mind of Wordsworth, though he presents it under a different aspect and with an opposite intent when, in his famous ode on "Intimations of Immortality," he wrote,—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,  
Hath elsewhere had its setting,  
And cometh from afar ;  
Not in entire forgetfulness  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God who is our home."

The opinion, however, is one not only wholly unsupported by Scripture, but directly opposed to some of its clearest statements; as, for instance, the account of the Fall in Gen. iii., and the apostle's declaration that "by one man sin entered the world," which could not be did each man derive his sinfulness from his pre-existent state.

(ii.) *Creationism*. According to this view each soul is created directly by God and placed by Him in the body. Jerome says this is the orthodox view; and certainly it is the one supported by most of the Fathers, who believed, as Clement of Alexandria expresses it, that *οὐρανόθεν πέμπεται ἡ ψυχή*. It was also held by many of the schoolmen; and it is the view generally held by divines of the Romish Church, as well as by many evangelical theologians. It is supposed to find support

from such passages as Isa. lvii. 16; Zech. xii. 1; Acts xvii. 24; Heb. xii. 9. But these prove nothing more than that God is the former of man's spirit no less than of his body; and say nothing as to the place where or the time when the spirit is formed, or as to the manner of its union with the body. Of those who hold this view some regard the soul as coming pure from the hand of God, and as becoming corrupt through connection with the body; which involves the heathen and Gnostic notion of the inherent vileness of matter.

(iii.) *Traducianism*. Those who hold this view deny that each soul is created immediately by God, and maintain that it is derived by traduction from the parents just as the body is. The whole man, body and soul, they regard as begotten and derived. Some hold this view in connection with a materialistic view of the soul, and some have even gone the length of asserting that the soul is divisible, and that a portion of the soul of the parents is communicated to the child. By those who hold this view, whether in its extreme or its more moderate form, reference is made in support of it to Gen. v. 3, where, in announcing the birth of Seth, it is said that Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." An appeal is also made to our Lord's words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." But these passages really prove nothing as to the point in question; the former only asserts that Seth was wholly like his father, and the latter that like produces like. It is urged also by Traducianists that only on this hypothesis can we account for the transmission of a sinful nature from parent to child. But this assumes that a sinful nature is actually transmitted from parent to child, an assumption which many who hold that all mankind are involved in Adam's guilt refuse to accept. At any rate, it is hardly competent to bring in one hypothesis to support another.

On the whole, I cannot help thinking that the safest course is to hold none of these views, but to leave the subject in that obscurity in which it seems to be left by God in the Bible. "De re obscurissima," says Augustine, "disputatur non adjuvantibus divinarum Scripturarum certis clarisque documentis." If, however, one of these views must be adopted, I think the second, that of Creationism, is on the

whole the one least burdened with difficulties, and most in accordance with the general representation of Scripture and with the nature of the soul as immaterial and indivisible.

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## CHAPTER III.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### III. PRIMITIVE MAN.

Having taken this survey of man in his origin and natural constitution, we may endeavour to realize him in thought as he was in the first stage of his existence on earth, as he was when he came forth, as Scripture relates, from the hand of his Creator.

Now, in respect of this I cannot but believe that we often impose upon ourselves, and cherish a picture which is not consonant with the reality, and foster an illusion which is not a little heightened and strengthened by the strong language commonly used in speaking or writing of man's condition in Paradise as one of absolute perfection. From such language we are apt to carry away the notion that Adam was a being not only physically complete and perfect, but also a being whose intellectual and moral nature was in its highest degree developed,—a being, in short, to whom nothing needed to be added to render him perfect in all his parts. Along with this, we are apt to fancy that his condition in Paradise was one of the most perfect felicity which the human nature is capable of enjoying.

Now, that this is an illusive view of man's primitive condition will, I think, appear from the following considerations:—

i. On a mere general survey, and looking at man simply in his physical and intellectual aspect, it must strike one that the highest state of man is not and cannot be that of a naked animal, with nothing to do but to keep a garden, already richly furnished with all that is "pleasant to the eye and

good for food." Viewing man, even in the lowest state in which we find him now, we feel that he must have been made for higher ends and worthier pursuits and nobler enjoyments than this. It is inconceivable that with capacities for thought and work, such as man even in the lowest state of civilisation is seen to possess, the perfection of his nature and his supreme felicity can have been realized in a state of such simplicity and in a sphere so limited as that which Paradise afforded to our first parents.

ii. It must also, I think, strike one that if Adam was the perfect being intellectually and morally he is often represented as having been, it is inconceivable that he should have fallen before so slight a temptation, or yielded to so trifling an impulse as that by which he was led to transgress the divine prohibition. Eve was seduced as a little child might be by a mere trifle—by talk insidious, indeed, and subtle, but by which a being of high intelligence and firmly established moral character could not have been led astray; such an one would at once have seen through the artifice, detected its falsehood, and spurned its impiety. As respects Adam, he, the apostle tells us, was not deceived; he so far surpassed his wife in intelligence that he saw through Satan's device; he saw that what he was invited to do was wrong; but what shall we say of his moral faculty or of his mental strength when we see him, for what reason we know not, but apparently from mere softness and desire to please his wife, knowingly transgressing the express command of God, a command which he had been so solemnly enjoined to keep? To me it appears incredible that any being of high moral capacity and mental vigour—a being approximating even remotely to the perfection of manhood—could have allowed himself to be drawn so easily to do what he knew to be wrong, and what he had been forewarned would bring such terrible consequences.

iii. The law of man's nature is that he reaches perfection only by a slow process of growth and gradual development, secured through the due exercise of his faculties. This is inseparable from his constitution as a free intelligent agent. That God could create an intelligent being from the first absolutely perfect, so that he neither needed to become nor could become more complete either intellectually or morally

than he was at the moment of his creation, is not to be denied, for with God all things are possible. But such a being would not be like any of those whom God has formed. Such a "monstrum perfectionis" would be an anomaly in God's universe—a piece of strange symmetrical spiritual mechanism (if that be not a contradiction in terms), in whom thinking would be a sort of clock-work, and in whom there could be neither goodness nor badness morally. It was not so that God made man. Man, as he came from the hand of his Maker, was a free, intelligent, self-governing agent, capable of development, and needing experience, trial, and use in order to attain both the proper growth of his physical and mental faculties and the strengthening, maturing, and perfecting of his moral nature. Of every such being it is in a very important sense true that he is his own maker. From God he receives the faculties and capacities by which he is to be enabled to fulfil the functions of his position; but he must himself use these, and use them wisely and well, if he is really to advance in culture and rise towards the perfection of his being. "Mankind," as Bishop Butler remarks, "is left by nature an unformed, unfinished creature, utterly deficient and unqualified, before the acquirement of knowledge, experience, and habits for that mature state of life which was the end of his creation."<sup>1</sup> This is the law under which man, as he exists now, is placed; he becomes strong bodily, mentally, and morally, not all at once, nor by mere mechanical processes, nor by natural instinct, but by the free and voluntary use of the capacities God has given him amid the varied experiences of life. "Nature," to quote again from Butler, "does in nowise qualify us wholly, much less at once for this mature state of life. Even maturity of understanding and bodily strength are not only arrived to gradually, but are also very much owing to the continued exercise of our powers of body and mind from infancy."<sup>2</sup> Butler even goes the length of maintaining that a person brought into the world with all his powers in full maturity would at first be "as unqualified for the human life of mature age as an idiot," and he questions "whether the natural

<sup>1</sup> *Analogy*, Part I. ch. v. p. 146 (Bohn's edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

information of his sight and hearing would be of any manner of use at all to him in acting before experience." Be this, however, as it may, there can be no doubt that it is only by experience that man in his present state advances to maturity. Now, we have no reason to believe that it was otherwise with our first parents. Their nature was the same as ours, and it is to be presumed that the same law applied to them in this respect as to us. They could reach perfection only by the continuous use of the faculties they possessed. It would seem even that their moral perception needed the discipline of evil before it could be fully developed; for it was after they had sinned that God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil," *i.e.* to make moral distinctions, to discern between good and evil (Gen. iii. 22). Not that they needed personally to sin in order to attain to this, but that it was only by experience that they could arrive at an apprehension of the distinction between good and evil. And as it was only by experience that their moral nature could be fully matured, so we may safely affirm of their whole nature that it could reach perfection only by the free and intelligent use of those faculties, physical, intellectual, and moral, with which God had endowed them.

"God created man as little as possible," is the dictum of a recent writer, "meaning thereby that we were endowed with the germ and crude capacity of that state for which we were intended, but that the exercise of our freedom was necessary to raise us up to the positive attainment of the dignity and bliss of perfect moral being." "Mere animal natures are finished from the first; God took everything that concerned them upon Himself, and left them nothing to do. But it was His will that man should be His fellow-worker in the great feat of his own creation, and thereby in the completion of all creation; the Father left the mighty work unfinished, so to speak, until the child should set his seal on it."<sup>1</sup>

We must think of man, then, in his first estate, as he came from the hand of his Creator, not as a perfect, fully-matured being, but rather as a man-child,—a man with noble capacities,

<sup>1</sup> Monsell, *Religion of Redemption*, p. 10.

but these as yet undeveloped, and with everything to learn,—an innocent, pure, guileless being, with no bias to evil, without any knowledge of evil, with affections tending naturally to good, and with a soul capable of rising to a freedom like that of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold sin, and who cannot be tempted of evil. Adam was placed in Paradise as in a school, a training-place suited to a beginner, and where the lessons and the discipline were such as his almost infantile condition required. As one of the schoolmen<sup>1</sup> expresses it: “Paradisus est locus inchoantium, et in melius proficiscentium; et ideo ibi *solum* bonum esse debuit, quia creatura a malo non initianda fuit non tamen *summum*.”

“The *actual constitution* of the first man,” says Dorner, “must not be so conceived as to imply that he was spared all labour and the conquest of the world intellectual and real, just as little as he was spared spontaneous moral effort. . . . It is of no dogmatical importance how high the prerogatives of the first man are placed, provided only two limits are observed—1. That God is not made the author of evil; 2. That man is not precluded from a course of ethical development by a too much or too little. Both are observed by regarding the first man as created with a pure, innocent nature, with a natural bias to good or a natural love for God. Beside this, there was in him, along with consciousness of self and the world, a natural bias to self and the world. These qualities cannot be antagonistic to each other. As they came from the Creator’s hand they existed in immediate, good, though still not perfect and indissoluble unity. On the other hand, this unity needed to be ratified by the will, by the good use of freedom. Actual living relation to God, because depending on the use made of freedom, cannot be perfect in the beginning, but must be the outcome of several divine acts.”<sup>2</sup>

I have referred to the descriptions which are often given, both in discourse and in writing, of man’s estate in Paradise as fostering a delusive conception of his actual condition and attainments in the first stages of his existence. The poets are here chiefly in fault. Take, for instance, the following lines from Montgomery’s exquisite poem, “The World before

<sup>1</sup> Hugo de St. Victor.

<sup>2</sup> *System of Christian Doctrine*, vol. ii. p. 82.



the Flood," in which a descendant of Adam describes his great progenitor,—

“ With him his noblest sons might not compare  
In Godlike feature and majestic air ;  
Not out of weakness rose his gradual frame ;  
Perfect from his Creator's hand he came ;  
And as in form excelling, so in mind  
The Sire of men transcended all mankind.  
A soul was in his eye, and in his speech  
A dialect of heav'n no art could reach :  
For oft of old to him the evening breeze  
Had borne the voice of God among the trees ;  
Angels were wont their songs with his to blend,  
And talk with him as their familiar friend.”

This is very beautiful, but it is poetry, not history. That man was created in this state of consummate perfection, transcending in intelligence as in form all mankind, is a vision of the imagination, not an expression of actual fact. That Adam was no imbecile, that his original state was not that of a savage, that he from the first possessed intelligence as well as a capacity of growth in mental power and attainment, and that he was not only absolutely sinless, but positively good, the Scripture distinctly leads us to conclude. But beyond this we have no right to go. All that we really know is that he was made good in every respect, and that he was placed in a sphere which was a training-place for the whole man, fitted for the development of all his powers.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

#### IV. PROBATION, TEMPTATION, AND FALL OF MAN.

Our first parents were placed in Paradise as in a school and in a sanctuary. They were surrounded by all that was necessary for their comfort and well-being, and they were brought into contact with what was calculated to develop the faculties with which they had been endowed, and fit them for

the high ends for which they were originally designed. They had to keep the garden and they had to keep themselves. They had to unite wholesome and moderate labour with the exercise of their mental powers, and the discharge of those moral and religious duties imposed upon them by the relations they sustained to each other, to animate creation around them, and to their Creator and Benefactor in heaven. They were thus in a state of training as well as of enjoyment; there was something they had to become as well as something they had to possess and use. But there was a peculiarity, in a moral respect, in their position beyond this. By the appointment of God they were not only under training, but under probation. There were not only certain results to be developed by natural process, not only certain ends to be secured by appropriate means, but certain mighty issues were suspended upon certain contingencies in their conduct. They were put upon their trial as free agents, and their final happiness was made to depend on the issues of that trial. By their own conduct was to be determined whether they should continue to enjoy blessing or be brought under a penalty. They were thus taught from the first that they were not only the objects of the divine beneficence, but the subjects of the divine government; "the proper formal notion of government," as a great thinker has observed, being "the annexing of pleasure to some actions and pain to others, in our power to do or forbear, and giving notice of this appointment beforehand to those whom it concerns."<sup>1</sup> Such was the constitution and order of things under which our first parents were placed. They were surrounded with blessing, but they were at the same time under law; and the test of their obedience was to be at the same time the criterion of their felicity.

In considering this part of man's primal history, we shall take up in order the following points:—1. The probation under which our first parents were placed; 2. The temptation by which they were assailed; and 3. The success of that temptation.

### i. *The Probation.*

(i.) This assumed the form of a restriction upon their

<sup>1</sup> Butler, *Analogy*, Part i. ch. 2.

absolute right to do as they would with the place in which God had placed them. That garden was given to them as their own to use it as they pleased, with one limitation,—of all the trees of the garden they might freely eat, excepting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This they were peremptorily forbidden even so much as to touch; and on the day they ate of it they were assured that they should surely die. On their conformity, then, with this restriction depended their enjoyment of life and all the blessings of their favoured condition; and the probation under which they were placed had for its design to test how far they were willing to submit to the will and authority of God as their Ruler and Law-giver.

It is essential to the idea of probation that certain conditions should be fulfilled in respect of the parties who are the subjects of it. First, they should clearly understand what is required of them; what they are to do or to refrain from doing; second, they should be perfectly free to do or to refrain from doing as required; and thirdly, that they should distinctly understand what will be the consequences of their failing of what is thus required of them. In the case of our first parents, all these conditions were complied with. They were placed under a single and most intelligible prohibition, respecting which there could be no possibility of mistake or uncertainty on their part; there was no power constraining them to do what they were thus positively forbidden to do; and they had clearly before them the consequences to which they exposed themselves by a transgression of the divine prohibition under which they were placed in that terrible threatening of death, which was announced by God as the certain and immediate penalty of disobedience. Whether they understood *all* the consequences which such conduct would involve may be doubted. It may be doubted even whether they fully comprehended any of them. But this at least they knew, that all that then constituted *life* to them in the fullest and highest sense of that term would be forfeited by disobedience, and that all that was terrible in *death*—not the less terrible because practically as yet unknown—would thereby be incurred.

(ii.) To some it has appeared as if there was something

in this arrangement unworthy of the dignity of the parties involved in it, or unbecoming the wisdom and beneficence of Him to whom it is ascribed ; and hence doubts have been cast on the historical integrity of this part of the Mosaic narrative. Why, it has been asked, make the fate of men depend on anything so trivial as the eating, or abstaining from eating, of the fruit of a particular tree ? Would it not have been more becoming, more wise, more satisfactory, better in every way, if there was to be a probation at all, to have made it turn on obedience to some great moral principle, or the carrying out of some system of moral acting, such as was worthy of a being of intelligence and moral power like man,—a being so highly endowed in these respects that he is said to have been made in the image and likeness of God ?

An objection of this sort it will not do to attempt to foreclose by the brief and objurgatory demand, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" for those who advance such objections are precisely those who are least disposed to admit that it is God who has spoken here. We must therefore take up the objection on its merits, and obviate it by showing that the positions on which it rests are untenable.

In the outset I have to observe that the objection is not the same with all by whom it is advanced. To refute it satisfactorily, therefore, it will be necessary to take it up under different aspects, these being determined by the feature of the arrangement which has appeared to different parties the offensive one.

1. And, first, there are some who seem to stumble at the *littleness* of the trial to which man was thus exposed, and on which such mighty results were made to depend. Had some great thing been required of our first parents as the test of their obedience, these objectors would have been better pleased ; but to make all depend on so small a matter as the eating of one kind of fruit rather than another, is to them offensive, and in their judgment unreasonable and absurd. Now, let us understand those who urge the objection under this aspect. What is it exactly in the littleness of this test by which they are offended ? Do they object to the making of great results flow from apparently little and trivial causes ?

If so, they must be prepared to object to one of the most manifest of those laws under which this world is administered ; for nothing can be more obvious and certain than that the mightiest and most permanent effects are constantly resulting from the most apparently trivial and transient causes. Or do they object to so feeble a test of man's obedience being imposed ? If this be their meaning, it is obvious to reply that so much the more was the arrangement favourable to man, and therefore beneficent and gracious. The more insignificant the self-denial required in order to obedience, the easier the obedience and the more probable the success of the probationer. In appointing so easy a test, God dealt with man as one who was in many respects but a grown child ; one who had no experience, however great his faculties ; and one on whom, therefore, it was only some simple test like this that could have been laid so as to gain its end. Never, we may say, was a moral experiment conducted under circumstances more favourable to the subject of it. It was an experiment, if we may so speak, as nearly *in vacuo* as the necessary conditions of it would admit. If man could not abide a test so simple and so easy as this, we may safely rest assured that under one more difficult and severe his failure would have been only more prompt and perspicuous.

2. As others advance this objection, it assumes the shape of a protest against the dishonour which it is alleged is done to God by the representation of Him as a being who would make a condition of spiritual advantage dependent on an external act. But those who urge this objection seem to have forgotten altogether the real circumstances of the case. By an external act they obviously mean the physical process of taking and eating the forbidden fruit. Is there any one, however, who for a moment dreams of putting that forward as the essential and qualifying element in the test to which man was subjected in the garden of Eden ? A mere physical act as such has no moral character at all ; and though it may be the index of a man's moral state or tendencies, it is not, nor ever can be, an adequate test of them. The test to which Adam and Eve were subjected was not so much whether they would eat or not eat this particular fruit, but whether they would respect and obey or neglect and transgress God's pro-

hibition. In itself the fruit of the forbidden tree may or may not have been noxious. This is of no importance as respects the probatory use to which it was put by God ; it is the fact that as soon as God forbade our first parents to eat of it, their doing so became *sin*, which made it a fitting criterion of man's spiritual destinies. It was not, therefore, on any mere external act that man's fate depended ; it was on such an act as connected with, flowing from, and giving evidence of a particular state of mind. The hinge in Adam's testing turned really not so much on his eating or abstaining from this fruit or that, but on his obeying or transgressing God's commandment. Was such a test unfair to man ? Was it unworthy of God ?

3. Another form in which the objection to the Mosaic account of the trial of our first parents is presented is that in which stress is laid on the purely positive and apparently arbitrary character of the test by which their obedience was to be tried. Why, it has been asked, should a duty which became such only because it was enjoined have been prescribed, instead of one of those duties which flow out of man's position and relations as an intelligent and moral being ? Now, to this it may be replied, on the one hand, that the appointment of a positive rather than a moral test was the only arrangement possible in the case ; and, on the other hand, that supposing another arrangement possible, this was the more favourable and advantageous to man. This was the only arrangement possible ; for how *is* the virtue of a sinless being to be tested but by means of some positive precept ? In such a being moral truth is so perfectly a part of the inner life, that it is only when a positive duty is enjoined that the mind comes to a consciousness of objective law and extrinsic government so as to render obedience. Morality, in short, is for such a life, and not a law ; it is part and parcel of themselves, and not something laid upon them by authority ; and continuance in it, therefore, can no more afford a test of their obedience to God as a governor than the regular performance of the animal functions would be a test of a man's loyalty or good citizenship. The necessity of the case, then, rendered the appointment of a positive test indispensable, if there was to be any real test at all. But even supposing a moral test could have been proposed, was it not much more in Adam's

favour that his obedience should have been tested by a positive enactment? What God required of him was thus clearly and unmistakably brought before him. There was no room left for doubt as to what was incumbent on him, and what he consequently had to do or to refrain from doing. One plain, positive law, simple in its enunciation, definite in its requirements, and easy of obedience, was all that was laid upon him as the test of his loyalty to his Sovereign and Lord. He had but to hear to understand: he had but to obey to live. The very simplicity of the constitution under which he was placed was an evidence of the divine benevolence towards him. While the test was fully sufficient for the end it was designed to answer, it afforded man, so to speak, the best possible chance of success in the probation under which he was placed.

4. Some profound thinkers have started the doubt whether it be possible for a limited intelligence, left to the freedom of its own will, to avoid transgressing the boundaries of duty, and so falling into sin. Without entering at present into so difficult a speculation, we may admit that a limited intelligence is, from the very fact of its limitation, very likely to be exposed to a strong inducement from mere curiosity, not to speak of other motives, to pass beyond the limits within which it may be confined. What lies on the other side of this barrier which I am forbidden to pass? Why am I forbidden to pass it? What will be the result to me if I do pass it? These and such like questionings, working in the mind, are very likely to result in a daring attempt to remove the barrier, or to overleap it, and thereby, if it be a moral barrier, to plunge into sin. Obviously, therefore, the kindest and best arrangement for man in his state of primeval probation was one which should reduce the action of such provocative curiosity to the lowest possible form, which should hem him in by no vague, mystic, uncertain prohibition, but by one perfectly single and intelligible, and which should leave him in no doubt as to the certain misery into which he would bring himself if he suffered any motive to carry him beyond the limits which that prohibition prescribed. Such an arrangement the wisdom and the goodness of God instituted for our first parents in their probationary state; their continuance in happiness was made to depend on their

submission to one simple and most intelligible restriction ; they had but to refrain from the fruit of one tree, while of all the others they might freely eat ; and they knew beforehand what the consequences would be of their violating this restriction. Life and death were thus set before them,—which they would choose ; and whilst everything around them and belonging to them furnished them with inducements to pursue the course by which they would secure the former, the motives that might work in them towards what would entail on them the latter were reduced to the lowest possible degree. Who shall say that in such an arrangement we have not an illustration at once of the beneficence and the wisdom of God ?

How long our first parents continued in the state in which they were created by respecting the divine prohibition, we are not informed, and it is idle to conjecture. We may presume, however, that it was long enough to enable them fully to prove the fitness for them of the place which God had prepared for their habitation, and to make some advances in that process of culture and development of which it was adapted to be the sphere. We have now to turn to the contemplation of the circumstances which led to their fall from their original felicity and their banishment from that garden of delights which God had given them to enjoy.

## ii. *The Temptation.*

In considering the Temptation by which our first parents were seduced from their obedience, we shall notice, first, the Tempter, and then the process by which he succeeded in his designs.

In the narrative of Moses the temptation of our first parents is said to have been effected by the serpent, described by him as “more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” The comparison here implied does not necessarily shunt us up to the conclusion that the tempter was one of the lower animals, for the whole effect of the comparison may be simply to intimate that the agent here introduced was more crafty than any of those living things with which Adam and Eve were acquainted ; they knew all the



beasts of the field which God had made, and could measure their power ; but now they were to come into contact with an agent of deeper craft, and whose subtlety they could not easily measure or master. But a comparison like this plainly necessitates our regarding the tempter here as *an actual being* ; a being having a substantive existence, and possessing certain properties which rendered comparison between him and the lower animals possible. Comparison may be between quality and quality, between being and being ; but not between being and quality. And as we are sure of the actual being of one side of the comparison here, we must set out with the conviction that the other side of the comparison is an actual being also.

There is no one, I presume, who takes this narrative literally as it stands ; no one who believes that one of the serpent tribe of its own accord, and by no impulse beyond itself, acted the part of the tempter on this occasion. In departing from the purely literal interpretation, however, we need not recoil to the opposite extreme, and regard this account as wholly parabolical and allegorical. The style of the historian is that of plain narrative, not that of allegory ; what precedes and what follows is simple historical narration ; and there is not the slightest intimation here of any departure from that style. All attempts, therefore, to give an allegorical colouring to this part of the narrative must be repudiated as arbitrary, and as forcing upon the passage a sense which it plainly does not bear.

We therefore set aside at once the notion that we have here a highly figurative delineation of the working of evil thoughts or unlawful curiosity in the human breast. The serpent here is not a thought but a thing ; and so we must hold it if we would not be found dealing lawlessly with God's word.

(i.) Who, then, was the tempter here ? If not a mere animal serpent, what being is it that appears here under this designation ? On this point we have the authority of Scripture for speaking without hesitation. We know that it was Satan who tempted Eve ; our Saviour tells us that that fallen spirit, the devil, was " a man-murderer from the beginning ; " and we find him on this account, and with obvious reference

to the narrative before us, called by Paul the "serpent," and by John "that old serpent." On this point, then, we can indulge no doubt. The only question that can legitimately arise is whether Moses applies the term serpent to the devil directly as Paul and John do, or whether he would intimate that the evil spirit assumed the form of a serpent, and in that form addressed Eve. I cannot say that it seems to me of much importance which side of this alternative we embrace; on either view that which is essential is preserved, viz. the fact of an actual temptation by the Wicked One of our first mother. Nor is it very easy to determine on which side the preponderance of evidence lies. The statement of the apostle, that Satan transforms himself into "an angel of light," seems to point to some well-known instance of such a manifestation of the adversary's power and craft, and besides the case before us there is no other instance on record in which he may be supposed to have assumed such a disguise. Nor can we suppose any case in which such a disguise would be found so suitable for his purposes. To what being was Eve so likely to listen without suspicion and without fear as to one whom she saw in the appearance of those shining visitants from the heavenly world whom she had been accustomed to welcome as messengers of light and love? But whilst this supposition favours the conclusion that the term "serpent" here is a mere designation of Satan, and intimates nothing as to his having made use of the animal serpent for his purpose, the subsequent part of the narrative in which an animal serpent seems to be certainly introduced as having had to do with the temptation of Eve, taken in connection with the prevailing belief of the Jewish Church, the traditions of the Oriental nations, and extensive prevalence of serpent-worship, and a belief in the power of divination possessed by the serpent in the ancient world, would rather conduct us to the conclusion that a real serpent was in some way employed by Satan as his instrument in this transaction. And perhaps it is to indicate this that Moses says emphatically "*the* serpent" here; meaning thereby not the serpent tribe generally, which are not remarkable for subtlety, certainly not superior in this to many other of the lower animals, but this one particular serpent—this terrible foe who in serpent's guise came crawling

into Paradise, and has left the poison of his trail on all earth's treasures ever since.

(ii.) Let us now consider the process by which the tempter accomplished his designs. Saluting Eve as the less enlightened, the less cautious, the less reflective, and therefore the more likely to prove a ready victim, he with apparent simplicity and artlessness put to her the question, "Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?" as if he only desired information on a point which had excited his curiosity. Under this simple question, however, was concealed a dark insinuation against God, as if it surprised the speaker to find Him holding back from the creatures He had formed and so richly endowed any part of the produce of the place He had given to them as their own. The tempter evidently sought to stir in Eve's mind some suspicion of the perfect goodness of God, and to beget the thought that in what appeared an unreasonable and needless restriction there was caprice or tyranny. Too crafty to rush directly to his point, or to place before the mind of Eve the vile insinuation as something coming from him, he by quietly assuming an air of incredulity and astonishment insensibly leads his victim in the direction where doubts and difficulties about the divine wisdom and goodness might spring up as the spontaneous product of her own mind. If such doubts, however, were excited by his question in the mind of Eve, she seems instantly to have subdued them, for she at once, with the genuine simplicity of unsuspecting innocence, answers his question, dwelling on the largeness of the divine bounty in placing at their free disposal all the other trees of the garden, and intimating the fearful penalty by which His prohibition of the one tree in the midst of the garden was sanctioned. Finding from her perfect ingenuousness that he might proceed more openly, and, indeed, must do so if he was to gain his end with her, Satan no sooner hears her utter the dreaded penalty than he proceeds boldly to play the liar, to call in question the sincerity of God, and to deride her fears, founded on the belief that God was sincere in what He had said, and meant to execute what He had threatened. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened,

and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." How daringly, but at the same time how cautiously and adroitly, he proceeds! First, he boldly impugns the veracity of God, assuring the woman that it was not true that death was consequent on the eating of the fruit, and probably confirming this by showing with what impunity he himself partook of it. He thus took away from her the great conservative power which a belief in God's faithfulness necessarily exercises over those who are placed under His law; and having thus, as it were, broken through the defences that encompassed her moral nature, he sets himself to work on her appetites and desires. Taking occasion from the name of the tree, he hastily insinuates that it possessed an intrinsic power to make those who ate of it wise; and perhaps also he dwelt on the beauty of its fruit and dilated on its sweet and nutritious qualities, for we find that the attention of Eve was forcibly drawn to these properties of it; she saw that it was pleasant to the eye, and good for food. It was her curiosity, however, and her ambition which the tempter sought chiefly to excite and play upon—her desire to know what had been veiled from her view, and to grasp what had been thought too precious a thing for her to possess. And with the promise of enlightenment and power, should she obey his counsel, he artfully couples the audacious assertion that God knew that such would be the effect upon His creatures of their partaking of that fruit, and therefore had forbidden it; thus insinuating that it was not from any regard to their welfare that He had thus acted, but simply from a jealous dread of their attaining an eminence where they might claim equality with Him. Thus gradually, cautiously, and craftily did the arch-deceiver weave round our first mother the meshes of his web, and ensnare her to her ruin.

The steps by which Satan advanced to his end were first to disturb the serene repose of piety in the mind of Eve by suggesting doubts or questionings respecting the divine goodness; then to drive from her mind the restraints which fear of God's threatening imposed by leading her to doubt the divine veracity; then to work upon her appetites and desires; and finally, to crown the whole by making her regard God as her enemy, and as one who could be actuated in His dealings

with His creatures by a paltry and pitiful jealousy. With whatever other feelings we may regard this exhibition of his ingenuity, we cannot fail to see how fully it illustrates all that the Scriptures teach of his craft and cruelty, and how strongly it enforces those admonitions which bid us not be ignorant of his devices or indifferent to his wiles.

### iii. *The Fall.*

Let us now turn to glance for a little at the immediate effect of the temptation. And here it is interesting also to observe the process by which evil consummated its triumph over Eve. The narrative of Moses, brief as it is, may be viewed as an articulate illustration of the analysis of the Apostle John in his theory of evil as consisting of the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. The woman, we are told, when she looked saw that the tree was good for food: there was the lust of the flesh, the craving of irregular appetite and lawless desire; and that it was pleasant to the eyes: there was the lust of the eyes, the inordinate love and desire of what is merely beautiful and attractive with the craving after the possession of what merely enriches and magnifies; and that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise: there was the pride of life, the unholy love of pre-eminence, the restless curiosity that would pry into what God has concealed, the ambition to grasp power above our due, and the impious assumption, if not of equality with God, yet of a right over ourselves independent of God. These three affections are the main sources and occasions of the evil which now predominate in the world; and we see they had all a share in bringing about the first sin that was committed on its surface. They saw the origin of evil in our race; and as they sat at its cradle, they have ever since nourished and fed it; nor shall it utterly perish until they have been entirely subdued, and man's whole nature has been restored to its pristine purity.

There is another statement of the N. T. which receives an interesting illustration from the process by which Eve advanced along the path into which the tempter had drawn her. "Lust," says the Apostle James, "when it hath con-

ceived, bringeth forth sin." This is the genealogy of transgression; first there is the evil desire, and then by natural consequence from that the evil act. So was it with our first mother; she began with lust and ended with sin. She allowed a forbidden desire to be nourished in her heart, and this quickly developed itself into a forbidden deed. A deceived heart led her aside; a mind betrayed by Satan betrayed her in turn. And as lust leads to sin, so sin naturally tends to propagate itself. Hence no sooner had Eve herself sinned than she sought to draw her husband into the same snare. Adam, however, was not deceived as she had been. He followed her example, but it was with his eyes open. Whether it was mere thoughtless indifference, or a too yielding affection for his wife, or a sort of chivalrous feeling that he would share with her in the risks she had incurred, that moved him, we cannot tell; but certain it is that what he did he did fully aware of the evil of it and the consequence of it. In any case his sin was great. He preferred a brief indulgence to the claims of duty and of gratitude. Forgetful of God and His authority and His law, he looked only at the beautiful and smiling image, and listened only to the horrid words of the fair but fallen partner of his life. Thus was he drawn to follow her example and to partake her sin. Then was man's first disobedience complete. Then was the ruin of our race accomplished. Then was the covenant broken and the curse incurred. Then was the image of God in man blotted and defaced. Then was discord produced between earth and heaven. Then did the bowers of Paradise, a moment before the abodes of stainless innocence, become the sorrowful scenes of guilt and passion and shame. At this sad sight

"Earth trembled from her entrails, as again  
In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;  
Sky lour'd, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book ix.

## CHAPTER V.

## SECOND DIVISION.—SIN.

## 1. THE UNIVERSALITY OF SIN.

From contemplating man in his original condition and early degeneracy, let us now turn to contemplate his actual condition in a moral point of view as he now lives and acts upon earth. And here, first of all, let us look at—

i. *The Testimony of Scripture.*

The assertion which the sacred writers make respecting man is that he is a sinful creature—that sin is universally characteristic of our race,—that all men, without exception, are sinners in the sight of God. Not only is this directly asserted in many passages, but the entire history of man as presented in the Bible, and all that the Bible proposes for man's culture and benefit, presuppose this. This last consideration renders it of importance that we should be thoroughly settled on this point, inasmuch as without a just and clear view of it we shall not be in circumstances to apprehend aright the remedial system to the development of which the Bible is chiefly devoted, and which constitutes the substance and supreme use of Christianity.

Of the passages in which the universal sinfulness of our race is formally asserted, there is none more worthy of notice than that embracing the reasoning of the apostle in Rom. iii. 9, 10, 11, etc. “We have before proved (*προηγουμένως*, previously accused or indicted) all, both Jews and Gentiles, to be under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” These sentences are quoted by the apostle from Ps. xiv. 1–3. They strikingly depict the universal sinfulness of the race. The Psalmist represents Jehovah

as looking down from heaven to see if there were any that understood, any that sought after God; as searching with His omniscient eye to discover if haply there were any that had not gone astray from Him and from goodness; and as finding the melancholy result that not one is to be seen who is not a sinner against Him. Destitute of a just sense of God or understanding of His claims, and without any desire of the heart towards Him, they have sunk into moral degeneracy and worthlessness. The great principle of morality being wanting or dormant within them, they speedily plunge into all practical vice and ungodliness; having turned aside from God, each goes in his own way, but all along a downward and darkening path. One character of evil attaches to them all; on all the same verdict must be pronounced. "All are under sin"—under its dominion, under its curse; and He, who on man's first creation proclaimed him "very good," now says as He looks on him, "There is none good, no, not one."

In the following verses Paul, still quoting from the O. T., and chiefly from the Psalms, goes on to set forth some of the manifestations of this depravity in man. He denounces men as pernicious, noxious, deceptive, and slanderous; as given to malediction and bitterness; as indulging in violence, and prone to sudden gusts of passion; ready ever to commit murder through their lust of revenge; and so mischievous and hurtful in their courses that destruction and misery become prevailing characteristics of their ways or mode of life. It is not the design of the apostle, of course, to charge each of these forms of evil upon all individually; what he intends is, in the first instance, to overthrow the self-confidence of the Jews by showing from their own books the extent to which, in spite of their privileges, sin and corruption had prevailed in their nation, and thereby to contribute to the support of his general position that all men are sinful before God.

This latter consideration tends to obviate an objection which has sometimes been urged against the conclusion we would draw from the apostle's language here. These passages, it has been said, are all cited from the O. T., and they occur there in a special application, so that they merely prove, what no one would deny, that there have been as there are bad men



in the world ; they do not prove that all men are sinful and evil. But even if we allow that, as originally used by the O. T. writers from whom they are taken, they do not assert the depravity of any beyond those to whom they are applied by them, yet the use which the apostle makes of them here shows us that he meant them to bear on the proof of the universal depravity of man. The general position he lays down is that "All men are under sin;" and to this the passages he cites are applicable only on the supposition that they directly contain or somehow involve the assertion of the universal depravity of man. Now, allowing that they do not all directly assert this, how does it appear that they lend support to the apostle's thesis? I reply, in two ways. In the first place, Paul employs them to assert forcibly and in language that would tell upon his readers the position he would maintain. Whether these O. T. writers assert it or not, there is no doubt that *he* asserts it; and as he preferred using language borrowed from them for the purpose of conveying his assertion of it more forcibly, it is surely absurd to argue from this that his assertion is thereby rendered invalid. It must be borne in mind that it is not with the apostle as it is with us in this respect; when we would prove a theological truth, we must see to it that the passages we cite from Scripture actually assert that truth, or logically involve it in the sense in which we wish it to be received. But the apostle needed not this support. His own assertion is as valid as could be that of David or Isaiah; and if he saw meet to express his own position in language borrowed from them, his meaning is to be interpreted from his own context, not from that in which the passages originally occur. The N. T. writers use the O. T. for various purposes, and it would be a serious mistake to say that the passage as quoted by them has in every case exactly the same signification, neither more nor less, that it has as used by the writers from whom they quote. But, secondly, the apostle's argument, as expressed in these words of the O. T. writers, is an argument *a fortiori*, especially as addressed to Jews. These passages are from their own Scriptures, and primarily they relate, by the supposition, to the Jewish people. Their truth, as forming parts of the divine word, no Jew could question; and the inference, that if such things could be truly said of the Jewish people,

much more could they be said of the heathen, is one which no Jew would feel the least inclination to question. Thus the apostle shuts up his readers to the admission of the universal sinfulness of mankind.

Even assuming, then, the passages quoted by Paul were not, as originally used, intended to enunciate this truth, they, as adduced by him, do most distinctly and forcibly announce it. Of one of them, however, it cannot be justly said that it does not, as uttered by the original writer, proclaim the sinfulness of the race as such. The language of the 14th Psalm, from which Paul largely quotes, is used, not of this class or that, nor of one nation rather than another. The language is as general as possible, and is evidently intended to apply to all men alike—to man as man under whatever peculiarity of outward circumstances he may be found. “The Lord looked down upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God [*i.e.* any one individual who regulated his life wisely, and was piously affected towards God]. All have gone aside together [*i.e.* one and all, יָחַד]; they are corrupt; there is none that doeth good, not so much as one” (ver. 3). No language could be more general than this, and therefore there is hardly an interpreter who does not understand it as intended to apply to the whole race. Both by David, then, and by Paul is the universal sinfulness of the race asserted in the striking words which the former uttered by divine inspiration, and which the latter by the same inspiration quoted from him.

In the words used by the Psalmist, and quoted by the apostle, there seems to be an allusion to an equally general assertion of the universal sinfulness of man uttered at an early period in the history of the race. In the days of Noah, God, we are told, “looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth” (Gen. vi. 12). This, of course, applies only to the men of that generation as respects its primary and immediate application; but the allusion to it by the Psalmist would seem to imply that as it was then so it has continued; earth is still filled with a guilty and sin-loving race.

There is another statement of the apostle bearing on this head which deserves notice. In Rom. v. 12 he argues that

"as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned* [*ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον*]." Interpreters differ as to the proper rendering and force of the words *ἐφ' ᾧ* here; some making them mean "in whom," *i.e.* in the one man by whom sin entered; others rendering them "even so;" others "into which;" others, as in the common version, "for that;" and others, "provided that," "on the supposition that," "it being supposed that." But for our present purpose it matters not which of these renderings we prefer, though either of the last is better than any of the others. What concerns us is the apostle's decided assertion that all have sinned. These words not only assert without qualification that all men are sinners, but it is essential to the apostle's argument that they should be so understood. His reasoning is this: Death is a penal infliction, and under a just government a penalty is inflicted only on those who are guilty of the offence to which it is attached. But death comes upon all men without exception; whence it follows that all have without exception incurred guilt, or become sinners. In the universality of the doom we see convincing evidence under the just government of God of a universal offence.

To these passages we may add such general statements as the following: 1 Kings viii. 46, 47; 2 Chron. vi. 36; Eccles. vii. 20, 29; Job xiv. 4, xv. 14; Isa. liii. 6; Rom. iii. 23; Gal. iii. 22; 1 John i. 8. Many such statements are found in the Bible, and indeed the doctrine of man's sinfulness and guilt so pervades the entire book that, like the figure upon the ancient shield, it could only be by destroying the book that it could be obliterated.

Among the proof passages commonly adduced on this head is 2 Cor. v. 14: "For we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead," *i.e.* in sins. If this statement of the apostle relates to mankind, the passage is undoubtedly valid for the purpose for which it is adduced; for if all mankind are dead in sins, undoubtedly all mankind are sinners; the two propositions are almost identical. But it may be doubted whether the passage is to be thus understood; and I refer to it particularly because of the opportunity I am thereby afforded of bringing before you another, and, as I think, a

much better exegesis of it. I regard the apostle as referring here not to a state common to all men, but to a peculiarity in the condition of Christ's people, His elect Church, viz. that they have had fellowship with Him in His death,—that they died in His death, and thereby have become dead with Him. This is a view of the believer's connection with Christ which Paul gives elsewhere. Thus, in Rom. vi. 2–11 he speaks of believers being dead to sin, being baptized for Christ's death, as being planted together in the likeness of His death, as having had their old man crucified with Him, as having died with Him, and as consequently to be reckoned as dead unto sin. Of the meaning of such language we shall fall very far short if we understand by it merely that through Christ's death in some way we are delivered from sin; the apostle plainly intends to teach that believers are one with Christ—partakers of Christ—persons having fellowship with Christ in His propitiatory work, so that in His death they died and are thereby freed from sin. In like manner in writing to the Galatians (ii. 20), Paul says of himself, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me;" where the same idea of the believer's participation with Christ in death and subsequent life is set forth. To the same head are to be referred such statements as in Col. iii. 3, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" 2 Tim. ii. 11, "It is a faithful saying, For if we died with Him (*συναπεθάνομεν*) we shall also live with Him," etc. I regard all these statements as resting upon one basis—as flowing out of one fontal thought, viz. that salvation, including justification and sanctification, comes to a man in virtue of his faith in Christ uniting him to Christ so as to become one with Him, and thereby bringing him to a participation of all that was secured by Christ's obedience unto death and resurrection from the dead. But, be this as it may, the passages I have cited plainly show that in some sense it is true of Christians that they are dead—that this is a peculiarity of their spiritual condition; and it is to this, I take it, that the apostle refers in the passage we are now considering. That this is the meaning of the passage appears from the following considerations:—1. The proper rendering of the passage is, "We judge thus, that if one died for all, then *the*

all (οἱ πάντες, for whom he died) died (ἀπέθανον, the aorist here describes an event contemporaneous with that described by the previous aorist, ἀπέθανεν)." Whatever it be, then, that is affirmed by the words οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον, it must be something which took place when the εἰς ἀπέθανεν, not something which was true of the race apart from Him.

2. The assertion ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον is adduced by the apostle as logically involved in the previous assertion εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν. This is the force of the ἄρα here following the εἰ of the preceding clause, "if,"—"then." But the fact that all men are sinners, and dead in their sins, is in nowise logically involved in the fact that Christ died for all. Take this latter statement in what sense you please, it cannot be held as logically included in the fact that the whole race of men are dead. This is a fact which stands quite independent of Christ's death, and, indeed, so far from flowing out of the latter, is presupposed by it. As it is a fact which would have remained such whether Christ had died for us or not, so, on the other hand, it was because this was a fact that Christ died. We cannot suppose the apostle to reason so illogically as to make the truth of a fact flow out of an act which itself flowed out of the fact.

3. In the 15th verse Paul describes a class of persons as οἱ ζῶντες, "they that live." Now, these are certainly identical with the πάντες ὑπὲρ ὧν εἰς ἀπέθανε, and this would lead to the conclusion that the word πάντες is used here, as it often is, for a limited totality, i.e. not for all men, but for all of a particular class, viz. those who, united to Christ by a living faith, are held to have died in His death and to live in His life.

4. Paul draws in the 16th verse an inference from what he has asserted in the 14th verse: "Wherefore," says he, "henceforth know we no man after the flesh." Here the apostle asserts that Christians from the time forward of the event previously referred to (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν) know no man after the flesh, i.e. do not esteem men according to a carnal selfish manner, and therefore are not moved by men's opinions or judgments in the discharge of duty. Now, what is it that the apostle says produces this effect upon the believer? It is the fact of his being dead. But this cannot mean being dead in sins, for that would have the contrary effect, the

effect of shutting up to a carnal earthly way of regarding men; it must mean being dead *to sin*, the having undergone that death to which he refers in the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans as realized by the believer through connection with Christ, and for which—with a view to which—he was baptized. When men thus die they pass out of the state in which they form carnal selfish judgments; they become new creatures, with whom old things, including such methods of judging, have passed away; they are alive through the Spirit, and so, being spiritually-minded, they judge according to the spiritual judgment and with a just spiritual discernment.

On these grounds I would take this passage out of the class of those in which the universal sinfulness of man is asserted, and rank it with those that set forth the great spiritual truth that believers have died in the Saviour's death, and are alive again through His life. We have no need to press into the service of our thesis passages of doubtful applicability; as already intimated, Scripture is full of statements on this head of the clearest and strongest kind. "In truth," as Dwight observes, "no doctrine of the Scriptures is expressed in more numerous or more various forms, or in terms more direct or less capable of misapprehension."<sup>1</sup>

Besides those express statements to which we have referred, the fact of man's sinfulness is involved in many of the most characteristic revelations of the Bible. It is involved in the provision of a sacrifice for the sins of the world; it is involved in the declaration that Christ came to seek and to save the lost; it is involved in the assertion that if a man die without an interest in Christ he dies in his sins and must perish; for, as Chalmers pointedly puts it, "If it be through the blood of Christ, the blood of expiation, that all who get to heaven are saved, then does it follow universally of them who get to heaven as of them who are kept out of heaven,—inclusive of the whole human race,—that one and all of them have sinned;"<sup>2</sup> it is involved in the sentence that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, which means, of course, that no man has ever kept the law so as to be held righteous by it; it is involved in the necessity

<sup>1</sup> *Theology*, Sermon, 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes of Theology*, i. p. 385.

of regeneration before any man can see the kingdom of God, for, as Dr. Pye Smith observes, "the Scriptures represent holiness of character in any of mankind as the *exception*, and as owing to *grace* which makes men 'new creatures' and 'all things new;' whereas the wickedness of extremely depraved men is put as affording fair specimens of human nature, because it is the spontaneous unchecked growth of our nature;"<sup>1</sup> and it is involved in the announcement that our bodies are to be changed so as to be delivered from a corrupting and polluting virus before they can appear in the heavenly glory. The peculiar character of the Christian dispensation as a dispensation of repentance involves the assumption of the universal sinfulness of the race. The gospel is a call to the race as such to repent and return unto God. "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). But what need of universal repentance, except on the supposition of universal sinfulness? The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; the Lord came to call sinners, not righteous persons, to repentance; and when, consequently, we hear Him addressing this call to "all men everywhere," we cannot doubt that in the view of heaven all men are sinners, and further, that unless this be admitted and realized, there is no just apprehension of the true nature and design of Christianity obtained.

It thus appears that the testimony of Scripture is decisive in respect of the fact that all men are sinners. "They that have read the sacred volume," says Howe, "cannot be ignorant that 'all flesh have corrupted their way;' that the great God, looking down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God, hath only the unpleasing prospect before His eyes even of a universal depravation and defection; that every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; that this world lieth in wickedness; and that this was not the first state of man, but that he is degenerated into it from a former and better state; that God made man upright, but that he became otherwise by his own many inventions; that by trying conclusions to better

<sup>1</sup> *First Lines of Theology*, p. 383.

a state already truly good, he brought himself into this awful plight; and by aiming at somewhat *above*, sunk so far *beneath* himself into that gulf of impurity and misery that is now become to him as his own element and natural state.”<sup>1</sup>

## ii. *The Testimony of Human Life.*

“The Scripture hath concluded all men under sin:” this we have already seen to be the sum of the Scripture testimony regarding the moral character and condition of our race. It is not to Scripture alone, however, that we may appeal in this case; the same conclusion is supported by the testimony of consciousness, by certain phenomena of human conduct, and by certain facts in human experience.

(i.) The *testimony of consciousness* conspires with the Bible doctrine that all men are sinners. All men know that they have done wrong, that they are continually doing wrong. They not only perceive that, tried by a certain assumed standard, they have deflected from the path of goodness and virtue, but they *blame* themselves for this, they cannot but blame themselves for it. In this self-blame lies the consciousness of *sin*. A man never thinks of blaming his head for aching, or his foot for being clumsy, or his nose for being twisted, because he knows that with these aberrations sin has nothing to do; they are not the result of free choice. But let a man perceive that he has acted in a way that is crooked, perverse, or mischievous, and he at once pronounces of his conduct that it is wrong, and condemns himself for it. It is true that by habit he may blunt his sense of the evil of his conduct; but this is effected rather through his diverting his attention from this aspect of his conduct than from his having ceased to feel it to be wrong and blameworthy when he fairly considers it. If we would see how a vivid consciousness acts in this matter, we must go back to the commencement of the man’s wicked career; we must look at the workings of his mind when the sin was new to him, when he was tempted to commit it for the first time. How painful and agitating were the exercises of his mind ere he came to the point of yielding to the temptation; and when

<sup>1</sup> *Living Temple*, Part II. ch. iv.; *Works*, vol. iii. p. 291, Rogers’ ed.



he had committed the sin, how bitter and agonizing was the remorse that ensued! In some minds the remembrance of one sin committed, it may be in secret and never brought to light so as to bring down censure from others, abides as a constant source of theme and self-reproach, covering the countenance with blushes, and causing the heart to throb at the very thought of it,—

“Some fatal remembrance, some sorrow that throws  
Its bleak shade alike on his joys and his woes.”

If any were to question the fact that man is conscious of sin, we might appeal to the curious fact that men who will repudiate at once the charge of being guilty of any particular sin they know they have not committed, will yet not only suffer themselves to be accused of sin in the general, but will even go voluntarily where they know this charge will be brought against, nay, will prefer a man who prefers it against, them boldly and strongly to one who merely feebly suggests it, or tries to explain it away. Let a preacher, *e.g.*, tell a congregation of respectable people that they are thieves, and drunkards, and liars, and unclean, and they will very soon forsake his teaching; but let him tell them plainly and forcibly that they are sinners, that they all do what is wrong, that they are verily guilty and blameworthy before God, and they will not only take no offence, but will commend and approve his teaching. Why is this but that they know in themselves that what he says is true?

Now, whence this self-blame, this self-reproach, but from the consciousness of sin? and if there be no one who is altogether a stranger to this, does it not manifestly follow that there is no one of our race who is not at the bar of his own conscience adjudged to be a sinner?

(ii.) We appeal to certain *phenomena of human conduct* as attesting the existence of sin in all men.

1. And here the first that strikes us is that all men impute blame to their fellow-men for what they do that is wrong. There is no man who seriously believes that his neighbour is not blameworthy when he injures him. Why is this? We never attach blame to the storm that injures our crops, to the lightning which strikes our cattle dead, or even to one of the

lower animals which injures us. Why, then, do we blame our fellow-men when they do us harm? Because, simply, we regard them as moral agents, and count their doing of harm to us sin. But if, when they harm us, they are counted sinners, are they not also sinners whatever wrong they do? It is not merely because it is against us that they have done wrong that we impute blame to them; it is because we regard them as free agents who could have done otherwise if they had pleased, and who are consequently to blame for not doing otherwise. Whenever men, then, act wrongly, they are liable to blame—they are to be counted sinners; and as no man ever yet lived who did not do wrong, as no person ever knew a man who at no time swerved from the path of right, we are shut up to the conclusion that all are sinners—wilful wrong-doers, who are therefore to be blamed.

2. Another phenomenon of human conduct to which we may appeal in support of this position is the unwillingness men have to think or speak about God. That such is the fact needs hardly to be proved. Men like not to retain the knowledge of God in their thoughts. They are ready to say in their hearts, "No God." They resort to every expedient to banish Him from their reflections. They cannot, indeed, eradicate the religious principle wholly from their bosoms; they must have something to worship and fear; but to meet this they resort to the expedient of inventing a God for themselves, to whom, either in gross idolatry or with more or less of avowed and open superstition, they do homage, rather than keep before them the knowledge of the living and true God. So familiar is this to us, that in civilized society it has become a sort of recognized courtesy that God shall not be spoken of; and were any one to introduce the subject into a company, not of bad men, but men of ordinary average good character, there would be immediately, if not by words, yet by most significant signs, clear indications given that the subject was felt to be a most unwelcome one, and that his introduction of it was a most unseasonable one, if not a piece of unpardonable rudeness. Now, how is this fact to be accounted for? No one can say the subject is unworthy his notice. No one can pretend that it is otherwise than most proper and necessary that intelligent and accountable creatures should

have their thoughts occupied with God, and should often converse together concerning Him. And it would be idle to trace the reserve which men show in respect of God to any feeling of reverence for Him such as would prompt them to confine their consideration of Him to their most secret and solemn moments; for the very men who are most unwilling that the truth should be brought before them concerning God are the most ready to consider and embrace every false or sceptical view that can be thrown out in relation either to His perfections or His government. I can see no way of accounting for this fact but by referring it to the existence of sin in men, and the consciousness of it in every human breast. A company of pure and sinless intelligences would not, if placed in a world like this, be so shy of God—so averse from thinking and speaking of Him, whilst all around proclaims His majesty and His beneficence. The conduct of man in this respect can be accounted for only by the supposition that he is not sinless and pure. "The only and true explanation is that God and the soul are themes that move disturbance. They suggest blame; they lacerate, in this manner, the comfort of the mind." "Men," adds the same writer, "are under a subtle and tacit but damning sense of blame, and cannot bear, on all occasions, or anywhere but in the public assemblies of religion, to have subjects introduced that remind them of it, and stir again the guilt of their conscience."<sup>1</sup> To all pure and intelligent beings the name of God is a name of joy: that among men it should have power to strike into silence or inspire with uneasiness is an ominous circumstance which can be accounted for only by the fact that man though intelligent is not pure, but feels himself guilty before God.

3. Another fact to which we may appeal as showing from man's conduct his consciousness of sin, is the fact that all men act on the supposition that sin is a thing to be constantly dreaded or guarded against. Whatever men may think or say of themselves, all men show by their conduct that they cannot implicitly trust others in this respect. They feel that they have an enemy in the souls of their fellow-men against which they have to guard. Hence they surround

<sup>1</sup> Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 155.

themselves with protection of every kind. In simple states of society they cultivate powers of self-defence, go abroad more or less prepared for battle, and lie down at night with weapons within their reach. In states where society is better organized, men surround themselves with the protection of penal laws, directed against the various offences by which one man may suffer at the hand of another; and not relying wholly on these, they seek by various other precautions to protect themselves and their property and their households from the sin of others. What are the locks and bars by which we secure our dwellings against the intruder,—the bonds, and receipts, and deeds by which we seek to guard against fraud and deceit—the oaths by which we endeavour to constrain men to speak truth, and other such like contrivances with which all who live in society are familiar,—what are they but evidences that men universally hold themselves prepared for wrong, and have to guard against it? Now, why this constant expectation of evil, this constant dread of harm, this uneasy state of preparation against possible iniquity? Is it not because men know that there is a terrible reality in the world called sin, and that from the influence of this no man is free, so that the only way to be at all secure is to act on the presumption that there is no quarter from which the incursions of the enemy are not guarded against? In a sinless state of society, in a society where sin was the exception, would not such precautions be regarded as needless and preposterous?

4. Another fact to which we may appeal under this head is the necessity universally felt for family discipline. "A child left to himself," says the wise man, "bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. xx. 15); and to the truth of this all experience gives testimony, so that wherever such a parent is seen following such a course with his child, the common sense of the neighbourhood confidently anticipates a result such as Solomon announces. Now, why is this? Why may not children be left to themselves to spring up as the flowers, or to develop their powers as the birds without control, without check, without chastisement? Why should their young life be disturbed by law, and discipline, and reproof, and punishment? Why should all wise men who care for their

children act on the principle that the best thing they can do for them is from the beginning of life to subject them to a system of discipline which it is often far more painful for the parent to enforce than it is for the child to submit to? Can any rational defence be offered for this, except that it is a known and undeniable fact that sin is in the bosom of every child, and that it is only by keeping him from the beginning under a scheme of government that that sin can be kept from growing into a monstrous and all-commanding power before which all moral restraint would be impotent, and by which life would be rendered a scene of lawless ferocity and reckless indulgence?

5. We appeal once more under this head to the fact that all men confess their sinfulness by adopting a religious system which is exclusively adapted to a sinner. There have been many different forms of religion in vogue among men, but however they may differ in other respects, they all agree in this, that they presuppose man's guilt, and profess to meet and provide for emergencies thence arising. In all of them we find the idea of propitiating an offended Deity; in all of them the rite of sacrifice is inculcated as a means of attaining this end; in all of them penances, mortifications, and painful inflictions are recommended as means of securing the divine forgiveness; in all of them ablutions as a method of purging away pollutions are set forth as important; in short, they are essentially *expiatory* in their character and pretensions. Now, why is this, but that man feels himself a sinner, and knows that he can come into the presence of Deity only to be condemned and punished for his sin unless some method of removing it be found? In the piety of a sinless being such ideas and acts have no place; they would never so much as enter his mind. An offering of expiation is a confession of guilt. As has been strikingly said with regard to the offering of human sacrifices, a rite which "has prevailed under every form of nature-worship," there goes up from all such painful and costly expiations "a dreadful, in some sense a prophetic, cry for help on the part of man, conscious that he is without God, and which could only on Golgotha be resolved into hymns and thanksgivings."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kurz, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 46.

(iii.) In turning to the facts in *human experience* which go to attest man's universal sinfulness, we may, in the outset, appeal to the large and unqualified admission of this which men, the most competent to speak on such a subject, have in all ages made. If we turn, for instance, to the literature of nations, what ample admissions do we find of this fact alike in poetical, historical, and philosophical composition! The experience which breathes through all the remains of ancient literature is that of men who were not ignorant of right and wrong, who were not weak so as to be unable to follow the right and refuse the wrong, but who were and felt themselves to be wicked, prone to prefer the wrong, and who knew that in consequence of this they were constantly doing wrong. "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor," are words which express the experience, not merely of the man who uttered them, but of all men in all ages, so that they have passed into a proverb. "Nemo sine vitii nascitur," exclaims Horace;<sup>1</sup> and says a poet of Greece,<sup>2</sup>—

ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ  
τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστι τ' ἱξμαρτάνειν.

"There appears," says Aristotle, "another something besides the reason natural to us which fights and struggles against the reason; and just as the limbs of the body when under paralysis are when they would move to the right are carried away to the left, so is it in the soul."<sup>3</sup>

How pointed is the language of Plutarch in speaking of the mingled good and evil of our nature: "Some portion of evil is mingled in all who are born; for the seeds of our being are mortal, and hence they share in causing this, whence depravity, of soul, diseases, and cares creep upon us."<sup>4</sup> How uniform also was the belief of the ancients in the defilement with which the soul went into the future world, and the need of a severe purification there before it could be admitted to the place of the blessed!

"Quisque suos patimur manes; exinde per amplum  
Mittimur Elysium, et pauci læta arva tenemus:  
Donec longa dies perfecto temporis orbe  
Concretam exemit labem, purumque relinquit  
Ætherium sensum, atque aurai simplicis ignem."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sat.*, i. 3. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Eth. Nicom.*, i. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Sophocles, *Electra*.

<sup>4</sup> *De Consol. ad Apoll.*

<sup>5</sup> *Æneid*, vi. 743.

"That the world lieth in wickedness," says Kant, "is a lament as old as history, nay, as old as the oldest poetry. The world began, it is allowed, with good, with a golden age, with a life in Paradise, or with one still happier in communion with heavenly being. But this felicity, it is admitted, has vanished like a dream; and now man's course is even with accelerated speed from bad (morally bad, with which the physically bad ever advances *pari passu*) to worse. . . . A few moderns have advanced the opposite opinion, which, however, has found favour only with philosophers, and in our day chiefly among pædagogues, that the world is progressively tending from bad to better, or, at least, that the basis of this lies in human nature. But this opinion assuredly is not derived from experience, if it is of moral goodness and badness, not civilisation, they speak; for the history of all times speaks decisively against it."<sup>1</sup> "Profound observers of the human nature," says Hahn, "in great numbers since Kant have acknowledged the truth of the Biblical doctrine, that the root of man's nature is corrupt, so that each feels himself by nature morally sick and unfree, and no one is able of his own strength to fulfil the divine law, though he acknowledges it to be good and inviolable."<sup>2</sup>

It is needless to multiply extracts: those I have given may be taken as a specimen of how the universal experience of mankind falls in with and attests the position so fully asserted in Scripture of man's universal sinfulness and guilt.

We might further dwell here on the fact that human experience taken on the most extensive scale refuses to acknowledge that it has ever come to the knowledge of a sinless and perfect man,—a fact utterly inexplicable on the supposition that men generally, or that some men, are sinless. We might advert also to the fact that experience attests that it is much more easy to find a clever and able servant or agent than one thoroughly honest, virtuous, and trustworthy. But it is unnecessary; the fact is so notorious that no man ventures formally to deny it, and it is only by ignoring it, or by the most curious expedients of word-juggling, that those who are

<sup>1</sup> *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, p. 1. Comp. also Part I. § 3, p. 26 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Lehrbuch*, p. 364.

unwilling to contemplate or admit it get rid of its solemn presence or explain away its existence.

Of these expedients one of the most common is to apply to this fact in the experience of our race some term, or to refer to it in phraseology, which insinuates that it is rather a misfortune that has befallen man, a calamity that has come upon him, than a state for which he himself is responsible, and which entails on him guilt. Thus it is spoken of as a disorder or a disease which has overtaken man, and Mr. Theodore Parker speaks largely and eloquently of it as a "misdirection of human nature." Now, what is such language intended to convey? Those who use it cannot mean us to take it literally; they cannot mean that when a man goes contrary to the order of the moral world he simply suffers some disarrangement or suffering, such as he endures when his digestive powers are out of order, or when a limb gets dislocated; they cannot mean that when moral law is transgressed by man an occurrence of the same kind has taken place as happens when an arrow shot from a bow swerves from the course it was intended it should follow, or a bullet fired from an ill-grooved rifle goes awry. In such a case everything like blame or censure would be out of place, and right and wrong would be terms of no moral significance. On this principle all denunciation of vice is an absurdity, and all punishment of crime a piece of gratuitous cruelty. On this principle some of Mr. Parker's own most eloquent and valuable utterances must be regarded as mere idle words, for they are denunciations of slaveholding and such arts as wicked and criminal. To take his doctrine literally, therefore, is to fix on him a charge of gross inconsistency and idle vituperation. But if such phraseology is not to be taken literally, how is it to be taken? To this no definite answer can be given by those who use it. The truth is they do not use it for the purpose of conveying a definite utterance of opinion. They employ it rather to conceal opinion than to express it. Their object is, without denying our position, to rob it of all its force. They cannot shut their eyes to the fact that evil has laid hold upon every individual of our race; but they seek to escape from unpleasant feelings in the presence of this fact by calling it by names that suggest other



ideas than those of guilt and blame. It is a poor expedient, and as foolish as it is poor. It is a mere trick of wordcraft which may deceive the unwary, but leaves the case exactly as it was.

Were it worth while reasoning with those who resort to such expedients, we might express to them our wonder that it does not occur to them to ask, Why should men blame themselves and others for doing what they call wrong? That men do so blame themselves and others is undoubtedly certain. We may appeal to any man's consciousness and experience in support of this. An individual, perhaps, here and there, may by dint of long practice have succeeded in silencing the monitor within, or may so little heed it that he is in nowise hindered by it in his career of sin. But he knows that it took him a long time to do that, that it was not without a hard struggle that he succeeded in that, and that the voice within though silenced is not dead, but is still prone to rise up and stun him with its reproving utterances. It is curious, also, to observe how the very persons who teach these views of human nature severely blame and censure others when they do them any wrong. Is this reasonable on their ground? Do they blame the elements when through their disorder some grievous injury is sustained by them in person or property? Do they blame the wind which blows down a tree or a house? Do they seriously pronounce censure on an epidemic, or animadvert on the moral impropriety of a pestilence? But if not, why blame a man if when he does what is wrong he is simply the victim of disease, or is simply following the bent of unfortunate circumstances? Does not this inconsistency show that they do not really believe their own theory, but in spite of themselves feel it to be true that the unalterable law of this universe is the law of *right*, and that the man who breaks that law in any of its requirements is not unfortunate and to be pitied, but is guilty and to be blamed?

There is thus abundant testimony from within man's own soul and experience, as well as in nature without him, to the fact of sin. The testimony of Scripture is thus amply confirmed. And they who would aright estimate man's condition and prospects as an intelligent agent must take this fact fully

into consideration. If it is overlooked or misinterpreted, an essential factor in the calculation will be missed, and the whole conclusion thereby vitiated.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SIN.

#### II. EVIL—THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

We have seen that sin has entered our world, and that it prevails universally over the race, so that there is not a man that liveth and sinneth not. We have seen also how it was that sin was introduced into our world, and by whose means man was drawn into it and brought under its power. Before proceeding to consider the effect upon the race of the first sin of the first man, there are two inquiries of a more general kind to which it may be proper to advert. These are, What is evil? and, What is the origin of evil in the universe?

These questions have engaged the attention of thoughtful men from early times. In respect of the first, conclusions have been reached which may be regarded as satisfactory; but though many attempts have been made to answer the second question none of them has been successful, and we must be content to leave it as an insoluble problem. Some of the more important of these attempts, however, it may not be out of place or uninteresting to notice.

##### i. *Definitions of Evil.*

To the question, What is evil? we may reply generally, that it is the antithesis or negation of good. It is not possible to give other than a negative definition or description of it. It is not something positive. In the abstract, evil is want of conformity to good; in the concrete, it is anything that is opposed to or comes short of actual good. Good is something positive, evil is simply the absence or negation of good. In this all are agreed. "All evil," says Origen, "is

nothing, since it happens as not being.”<sup>1</sup> “No nature,” says Augustine, “is evil, and this name is only of the privation of good,”<sup>2</sup>—a statement which he after repeats in the course of his writings. Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero all taught that by nature all things are good; evil arises when there is a dereliction from nature or a negation of it. “Evil,” says St. Basil, “is not a living substance and endowed with soul, but an affection of the soul contrary to virtue sprung from the desertion of good, so that we have no need to seek for a primitive evil.”<sup>3</sup> “Properly speaking,” says Leibnitz, “evil formally has not an efficient cause, for it consists in privation, that is, in that it is not made by an efficient cause. Hence the schoolmen are wont to call the cause of evil *deficient*.”<sup>4</sup> But I have nowhere seen this point more clearly and accurately exhibited than by the French philosopher Bartholmess. “Considered in an abstract manner,” he says, “evil is the negation of, or the antithesis of, good. Now, good in any being is the entire and facile development of its nature conformably to itself, to its end, and to its law. God alone realizes for us the idea of the absolute good, because He possesses the plenitude of being, and encounters no limit to His attributes. God also enjoys absolute and boundless felicity. The idea of a perfect being, therefore, excludes the possibility of evil as its proper negation. With created and finite beings evil consists in their very imperfection, or in the disagreement between their nature and their end, their actions and their law. The complete, regular, and facile accomplishment of all the particular ends concurring to a general end is order, or the general good; the derogation from order, the infraction of the universal law, or of those which regulate each being in particular, constitute evil. It thus appears that evil is not in itself anything positive; it is resolvable into either a negation, an imperfection, a defect, or a discordance between the end of beings and their development.”<sup>5</sup>

A threefold division of evil has been signalized, viz. into

<sup>1</sup> Πᾶσα ἡ κακία οὐδὲν ἐστίν, ἐπὶ καὶ οὐκ ἔστι τυγχάνει. *De Princip.* ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> “Cum omnino natura nulla sit malum, nomenque hoc non sit nisi privationis boni.” *De Civit. Dei*, xi. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *In Hexam.* Hom. ii.

<sup>4</sup> *Theodicée*, Pt. i. § 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*, T. iv., p. 61.

*Metaphysical, Physical, and Moral.* The first, *malum metaphysicum*, has been defined by Leibnitz<sup>1</sup> as "in the general consisting in the imperfection of things, even such as are non-intelligent;" the second, *malum physicum*, as relating "specially to what incommodes intelligent substances;" and the third, *malum morale*, as "belonging to the vicious actions of such." Stapfer defines them thus: "*Malum metaphysicum* is defect of ulterior or greater perfection in a thing, and consists, therefore, in limitation of essential determinations;" or it may be called "the absence of ulterior reality and perfection in creatures;" *Malum physicum* is "whatever is thought to render the state of things as respects natural effects more imperfect than they would have been had they been other than they are;" and *Malum morale* is "that on account of which men's actions are said to be vicious."<sup>2</sup> Or we may state the distinction thus:—Every existence has an ideal or ulterior perfection; when it comes short of that there is evil. Every sentient being has happiness as its end; whatever impedes or destroys this is evil. Every intelligent being is bound to be morally good and virtuous; wherever there is a departure from this, or a coming short of it, there is evil. It may, however, be doubted whether the first of these should not, as well as the last, be restricted to *intelligent* existences; inasmuch as it is only as it affects them that imperfection in themselves, or in other existences, is an evil. It may be further observed that even in reference to intelligent existences imperfection is not so much an evil as a possible cause or occasion of evil; for limitation, or even defect, if it do not lead to unhappiness or sin, and if it do not hinder the due development of the being towards its proper end, cannot with strict propriety be called an evil. All creature perfection is necessarily relative perfection; absolute perfection belongs only to God; consequently, if imperfection were in itself an evil there would be no creature, however exalted and holy, who would be free from evil. Not only so, but it may be better for a creature to be imperfect, as compared with an

<sup>1</sup> "*Metaphysicum generatim consistit in rerum etiam non intelligentium imperfectione; physicum accipitur speciatim de substantiarum intelligentium incommotis; morale de earum actionibus viciosis.*" *Causa Dei Asserta*, § 30-32.

<sup>2</sup> Stapfer, *Institt. Theol. Polem.*, T. i. p. 110.

ideal or absolute perfection, than to be perfect, because thereby more fitted for the position he has to occupy in the universe.

(i.) We may satisfy ourselves, then, with a twofold division of evil—*physical* and *moral*: the former being whatever is opposed to or less than good, in the sense of happiness; the latter whatever is opposed to or less than good in the sense of rectitude, virtue, or holiness. We may further distinguish between the absolutely good and the relatively good; the former of which is to be desired for its own sake, the latter of which may be desired as a means to an end. A correspondent distinction of evil may be made; the antithesis of the absolutely good being the absolutely evil, which cannot be chosen by perfect wisdom and holiness, either for itself or as means to an end; and the antithesis of the relatively good being the relatively evil, which, though not to be chosen for itself, may be used by infinite goodness and wisdom as a means to an end, and which in the case of physical evil may be even desired as the means best adapted to secure some end that is good.

(ii.) Moral evil is often identified with sin. It would be more correct to say that sin is moral evil viewed under a certain aspect, viz. as lawlessness (*ἀνομία*), as “*illegalitas seu difformitas a lege*.”<sup>1</sup> Moral evil is evil *in genera*; sin is evil *in specie*; the former is *malum in se*, the latter is *malum prohibitum*; and as the commission of what law forbids entails guilt and exposes to punishment, this latter becomes also *malum culpæ*.

(iii.) The relations of physical and moral evil may be stated thus: 1. Physical evil is by the divine ordinance the consequence of moral evil, and frequently the outward exponent of what is hid from created vision. 2. Physical evil is *malum pœnæ*, the punishment which is made to fall on the being who has been guilty of the *malum culpæ*: “Evil,” says Augustine, “is twofold; there is the evil which a man does and the evil which he suffers; what he does is sin, what he suffers is punishment. The Divine Providence moderating and governing all things, man so does evil as he wills that he suffers ill which he would not.”<sup>2</sup> 3. Physical evil may often

<sup>1</sup> Calovius, *System. Locc. Theol.*, v. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> “*Dupliciter appellatur malum, unum quod homo facit, alterum quod patitur*;

be the means of preventing moral evil, and of securing the opposite good; it may thus become not merely, as Hierocles calls it, *πονηρίας λατρική*, but even a mediate or subsidiary good.<sup>1</sup> 4. The converse may not lawfully take place; moral evil may not be resorted to for the averting of physical evil; God never directly wills evil that good may come; and He has forbidden this to us. 5. It is nevertheless possible, for aught we know to the contrary, that moral evil may be the condition without which intelligent creature existence cannot reach its highest and most perfect development, *i.e.* becomes entirely and for ever superior to all defect and evil; and for this reason, though not directly willed by God, it may be permitted by Him.

(iv.) The distinction between physical and moral evil has by some been subverted. This is pre-eminently the case with the Pantheistic school. With them, indeed, moral evil as such is wholly ignored. According to Spinoza, "Good is that which we certainly know to be useful; and evil that which we certainly know to impede or hinder in any degree our attaining any good." We propose to ourselves an idea of man, or an exemplar of human nature, and good is that which we know to be the medium of more and more approaching to that; while evil is what we know to hinder us from reaching that.<sup>2</sup> Thus, from our concept of good, all notion of moral rightness or conformity to ethical law, and from our concept of evil all notion of moral turpitude or difformity from moral law, is excluded. Good is simply what is useful, as tending to the more perfect development of our nature; and evil is only what is noxious, as tending in some degree to impede that development. There is thus neither moral good nor moral evil; all is purely physical or natural. Nor is this other than a necessary consequence of the Pantheistic concept of the universe. For if God be the immanent cause of all

quod facit peccatum est, quod patitur pœna. Divina Providentia cuncta moderante et gubernante ita homo male facit quod vult ut male patiatur quod non vult." *Contr. Adimant.* c. 26. So also Grotius: "Est autem pœna generali significatur malum passionis quod infligitur ob malum actionis." *De Jure*, l. ii. c. 20, § 1.

<sup>1</sup> "Mala physica interdum fiunt bona subsidiata tanquam medix ad majora bona." Leibnitz, *Causa Dei Assert.*, § 35.

<sup>2</sup> Spinoza, *Ethics*, Pars iv., *præfatio*.

things, and if all thought be simply God thinking, simply the consciousness of the one infinite substance, there cannot be any real or essential distinction between right and wrong, moral good and moral evil, because that would argue essential distinction in the divine substance, which is impossible. Pantheism thus leads necessarily to the obliteration of moral distinctions as such, and resolves good and evil into the merely accidentally useful or hurtful. Less pronounced are the conclusions of the naturalistic or sensualistic school on this head; but with them also there is no real place for moral evil or sin. With them all is the outcome of nature; good is that which is in accordance with nature and promotes human happiness; evil is only at the worst defect, a shortcoming from the abstract ideal, incident in the process of development to a being which is gradually, by purely physical agencies, working towards it the realization of that ideal. As Principal Tulloch has well remarked, "The two conceptions of sin and of development in this naturalistic sense cannot coexist. I cannot be the mere outcome of natural law, and yet accountable for the fact that I am no better than I am. If I am only the child of nature, I must be entitled to the privileges of nature. If I have come from matter alone, then I cannot dwell within the shadow of a responsibility whose birthplace is elsewhere—in a different region altogether."<sup>1</sup> To be in accordance with their own fundamental principles, the disciples of the sensualistic school must hold that pleasure is the only good, and pain or suffering the only evil, of which we have any knowledge. To the other extreme have gone those who would resolve all evil into that which is immoral, regarding pain and all forms of physical evil as mere accidents which the wise man will regard with indifference, or as necessarily involved in that moral evil of which they are the punishment. But it is vain to deny that pain, suffering, disorder, are real evils; and it is a mistake to include that which is the consequence and penalty of sin as part of the sin itself. As the pleasure which God has made to attend on goodness is not itself goodness, so the pain which He has made to attend on sin is a real evil, which must ever be discriminated from sin itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, p. 5.



ii. *The Origin of Evil.*

Passing on to the consideration of the origin of evil, we come to a question the most perplexing of all connected with the subject of evil. *Πόθεν τὸ κακόν*; this is an inquiry which from the dawn of speculation has excited the curiosity and exercised the ingenuity of philosophic thinkers.<sup>1</sup> The hypotheses which have been advanced for the solution of this problem may be classed under two heads, as the Dualistic and the Monoistic. The Pantheistic hypothesis does not come into consideration here; for on it the distinction between good and evil virtually disappears, both being viewed as only varied applications or manifestations of the One original, infinite, and eternal substance. We may also pass over the hypothesis of pre-existence — a hypothesis which was favoured by Plato, who thought that our present knowledge is but a reminiscence of what we experienced in a previous state of being, and who imagined he was furnished by this with an argument in favour of the immortality of the soul, inasmuch as the soul having passed from a previous state into the body without suffering dissolution, might be presumed capable of passing out of the body into a future state without being thereby destroyed.<sup>2</sup> This notion of Plato, which he probably derived from Pythagoras,<sup>3</sup> was adopted by some of the Christian Fathers, especially by Origen, whilst by others it was sternly repudiated.<sup>4</sup> Some such notion seems to have been in the mind of Wordsworth when he wrote his splendid ode, entitled, "Intimations of Immortality from recollections of early childhood."<sup>5</sup>

Strange to say, this notion has been of late revived in theology by some who imagine it helps to account for the fact

<sup>1</sup> "Ædem materiæ apud hæreticos et philosophos voluntantur, iidem retracatus implicantur: Unde malum et quare?" Tertullian, *De Præscr. Hæret.*, c. 7. *περὶ τοῦ πολυβουλλήτου παρὰ τοῖς αἰρισιώταις ζητήματος, τοῦ Πόθεν ἡ κακία.* Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 27. Comp. also Epiphan. *Hæres.*, xxiv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Plato's *Phædo*, c. 18, p. 73 A; *Meno*, p. 81 B; *Phædrus*, p. 249 C; cf. Cicero, *Tusc. Quæst.*, i. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. Laert., l. viii. c. 4; Theodoret, *Epitom. Div. Decret.*, l. 9, p. 272, quoted by Suicer, *Thes. Eccles.*, s.v. *ψυχή*.

<sup>4</sup> Epiphan., *Hæres.*, lxiv.; Photius, *Epist.*, i. p. 11, etc.; Cyrill. Alex., *In Johan.*, l. i. c. 9; comp. Davis's note to Cicero, *Tusc. Qu.*, i. 24.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, p. 176.



of original sin. It is a hypothesis, however, wholly imaginary; it rests upon no evidence of any kind; and as related to the question of the origin of evil, it is wholly worthless; for even were we to admit it, it merely "removes," as Stewart remarks, "the difficulty a little out of sight, without affording any explanation of it." To the question, Whence is evil? it is no answer to say, It came with man from a previous state of being; for this only provokes the inquiry, How came it into that previous state of being?

(i.) The Dualistic hypothesis is the earliest of which we have any knowledge, and it is that which, we may say, would most naturally occur to those who, without the knowledge of the one living and true God, sought to follow up the sequence of good and evil in the universe to a primal source.

1. The oldest form in which this hypothesis appears is that of Zoroastrianism, of which the more recent Parseeism is a product. In the *Zend-Avesta*, which, if not the production of Zoroaster himself, is the authentic record of his teachings, and is of great antiquity, it is taught that infinite, boundless Time, of the origin of which no wise man inquires, brought forth fire and water, from the union of which came Ormuzd (the Oromasdes of the Greek writers), the luminous, pure, fragrant, the lover of all good, and capable of all good. As he looked into the abyss, he saw at a vast distance Ahriman (the Arimanes of the Greeks), black, impure, of evil savour, and wicked. Ormuzd, startled by the sight of this terrible foe, set himself to endeavour his removal, considered how this might be accomplished, and gave himself to this work. Thus arose conflict between the two,—between the supremely good and the supremely evil principle, between light and darkness, of which the universe is the theatre. This conflict, the idea of which is the general formula of the universe, is symbolized in the natural world by the succession of day and night, which dispute the empire of Time, and alternately put each other to flight. Man also is the subject of this conflict. From Ormuzd he has received a soul, understanding, judgment, the principle of sensation, and the five senses.<sup>1</sup> From Ahriman come to men lust, want, envy, hatred, defilement, falsehood, and wrath. Thus it is that there is evil in the

<sup>1</sup> Anquetil du Perron, *Zend-Avesta*, Paris, 1771.

world, and that the evil constantly strives against the good.

Whatever else may be said of this speculation, it must, as an attempt to explain the origin of evil, be pronounced wholly inadequate. For whilst, on the one hand, it starts from the assumption of a primal unity as the source of good, it, on the other, leaves the origin of the evil principle immersed in obscurity. If Ahura Mazda, the Eternal Time, produced Ormuzd, how or by whom was Ahriman produced? As to this opinions differ among the Parsees. Some say that Time produced Ahriman in order that Ormuzd might know that it is omnipotent; others say Time produced both Ormuzd and Ahriman, that the bad might be mingled with the good, and diversified things be produced; others, that Time did not produce Ahriman, though able to do this had it so pleased; and others, that Ahriman is a fallen angel, cursed because of disobedience.<sup>1</sup> These, it will be seen, are not answers to the question, Whence is evil? but rather mere evasions of it. The whole remains in darkness, unless it be said that the primal unity, Infinite Time, produced the evil as well as the good.

2. Among the Greeks the Dualistic Hypothesis assumed a different form. Whilst they held the existence of an eternal deity (τὸ θεῖον), they also taught that there is an eternal matter (ὑλη), the material cause of things. This Hylè they "represented under various images—as the darkness that exists along with the light; as the void (κένωμα, κενόν) in opposition to the fulness of the divine life; as the shadow that accompanies the light; as the chaos, the stagnant, dead water."<sup>2</sup> This Hylè is thus essentially evil; and as it has acquired a sort of life and energy, there has arisen an active opposition to the godlike, and hence, as products of the Hylè, all evil things and beings have come into existence. This hypothesis may be regarded as in a way accounting for the origin of evil; but it rests on a basis which is purely imaginary, the existence of an eternal Hylè being assumed without a shadow of evidence. It may be therefore relegated to that limbo where rest so many idle fancies with which speculative thinkers have

<sup>1</sup> Vullers, *Fragmente üb. die Religion des Zoroasters*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Neander, *Hist. of the Church*, vol. ii. p. 13, Eng. Tr.

amused or deceived themselves when seeking to account for what lies beyond the bounds of human knowledge.

This Hylëistic hypothesis was revived among the Gnostics, by certain of whom it was mixed up with and modified by opinions and notions borrowed from Christian sources. Such was the doctrine taught by Basilides and Valentinus and their followers. Others among the Gnostics adopted the Persian hypothesis, "a doctrine," as Neander remarks, "which it would be natural, especially for those Gnostic sects which originated in Syria, to appropriate to themselves." Of these sects, that best known is that of the Manichæans, so called from their founder, Manés or Manis, a Persian sage, who, falling under the displeasure of the Magi, was persecuted by them and obliged to flee, and who, alienated from the tenets which they favoured, sought, by combining Christianity with the unqualified dualism of the ancient Parsee faith, to construct a religious system that should satisfy human reason and account for the facts of the world. Of this system the following account is given by Gieseler:—

"His system of religion rests on the assumption of two everlasting kingdoms coexisting and bordering on each other, *the kingdom of light* and *the kingdom of darkness*, the former under the dominion of God, the latter under the demon, or Hylë. After the borders had been broken through by a war between the two kingdoms, and the material of light had been mixed with the material of darkness, God caused the world to be formed by the *living spirit* (*ζῶν πνεῦμα*, *spiritus vivens*) out of this mixed material, in order that by degrees the material of light here captured (*anima* and *Jesus patibilis*) might be again separated, and the old boundaries restored. Two exalted natures of light, *Christ* (whom Mani calls in preference *dextra luminis*, τοῦ αἰδίου φωτὸς υἱός, etc.) and the *Holy Spirit*, the former dwelling in the sun and moon (*naves*), the latter in the air, conduct this process of bringing back the material of light, while the demon and the evil spirits, fettered to the stars, endeavour to hinder them. In every man there dwells an evil soul besides the soul of light; and it is his commission to secure to the latter the sway over the former, to unite with it as many as possible of the elements of light which are scattered in nature, especially in certain

plants, and thus to free it from the fetters of the evil principle, and prepare the way for its return to the kingdom of light."<sup>1</sup>

This curious compound of Oriental theosophy with Christian ideas found many to accept it, though it was vehemently opposed by the Catholic Church and the most eminent of the Christian Fathers. In the early part of his career it was espoused by Augustine; but he soon after renounced it, and became one of its most determined, as he was one of its ablest, opponents. After having apparently died out, it suddenly sprang up again in the East in the 12th century, in the sect of the Paulicians, and rapidly spread through many parts of Europe. "It was soon discovered," says Gibbon, "that many thousand Catholics of rank, and of either sex, had embraced the Manichæan heresy, and the flames which consumed twelve canons of Orleans was the first act and signal of persecution."<sup>2</sup> This was followed by many other such acts, directed chiefly against the Albigenes in the south of France, who united with the Paulicians in their opposition to Rome, and in their attachment to a simpler polity and a purer worship than that which Rome upheld, though to what extent they had embraced the peculiar doctrine of Manichæism does not clearly appear. Strange to say, this doctrine found favour with a philosopher of our own age. Writing of his father, Mr. John Stuart Mill says, "He found it impossible to believe that a world so full of evil was the work of an author combining infinite power with perfect goodness and righteousness, and he was not disinclined to the Sabæan and Manichæan theory of a good and an evil principle struggling against each other for the government of the universe."<sup>3</sup>

In this system it is evident that the Christian elements are wholly subordinated to the old Pagan hypothesis of an eternal good and an eternal evil principle; it is simply a reproduction of the Zoroastrian doctrine, and is exposed to the same censure

<sup>1</sup> *Compendium of Eccles. Hist.*, translated by Davidson, vol. i. p. 224, Clark's Series. A very full account of the Manichæan system is given by Neander, *Gen. Ch. Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 157 ff., Torrey's translation. He describes it as a "Buddhist-Zoroastrian-Christian system." See also Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, arts. *Maniché* and *Paulicien*.

<sup>2</sup> *Decline and Fall*, vol. x. p. 177, Milman's edition.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography*, by J. S. Mill.

which the all but unanimous judgment of mankind has pronounced upon it.

(ii.) Turning now to the Monoistic hypothesis, we shall at once dismiss, as not deserving consideration, the Pagan doctrine that the one infinite and eternal God is the author of evil as well as good.<sup>1</sup> Such a doctrine not only contradicts all the laws and facts of man's moral consciousness, but is in fact suicidal; for if God be the author of evil as well as of good, there must be a duplicity in His essence, or He must be liable to change, and in either case He ceases to be eternal and infinite. There can be no just conception of God which does not regard Him in relation to evil as simply permitting it, not causing or originating it.

But assuming that God simply permits evil, the question remains, Whence did it originate? and with this comes up another question, How is it that evil has been permitted by God?

To the first of these questions an answer has been given which has come down from Plato, through St. Augustine, Leibnitz,<sup>2</sup> and others to our own time. This answer founds upon the position that evil is not something positive, but something negative, and arises from a negative cause, viz. the necessary limitation and imperfection of the creature. "Where shall we find the source of evil?" says Leibnitz. "The answer is, It must be sought in the ideal nature of the creature in as far as that nature is shut up in the eternal verities which are in the understanding of God, independent of His will. It must be considered that there is an *original imperfection in the creature* previous to sin, because the creature is limited essentially; whence it comes that it cannot know all, and that it can be deceived and commit other faults." In later times one of the ablest expounders and defenders of this theory was Dr. Edward Williams, theological professor in Rotherham College. It is set forth by him in his *Essay on Equity and Sovereignty*, and also in his notes to Edwards *On*

<sup>1</sup> "Pagani bona et mala, tetra et splendida, perpetua et caduca, mutabilia et certa, corporalia et divina unum habere principium dogmatizant." Augustin, *Contr. Faust.* l. xx. c. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See Cudworth, *Intell. Syst.*, vol. i. p. 448 ff., Harrison's ed.; Augustin, *De Civitate Dei*; Leibnitz, *Theodicæ*, i. 20, etc.

*the Will*, in the edition of Edwards' Works edited by him and the Rev. Ed. Parsons.<sup>1</sup> From the latter source I borrow a statement of his view as to the origin of evil. "The entrance of sin into the world, or the true and precise origin of moral evil, may be found in *two causes united*, the one positive, the other negative, but neither of which is morally good or morally evil. If the cause were morally good, the effect could not be morally bad; and if morally evil, it would be contrary to the third axiom [that the origin of moral evil cannot be moral evil, which would make a thing the cause of itself] and to common sense. These two causes are, first, *liberty*—a cause *naturally* good; secondly, *passive power*—a cause *naturally* evil. And these two causes are as necessary for the production of moral evil as two parents for the production of a human being according to the laws of nature." On this it is obvious to remark that one does not see how *liberty*, which is merely freedom to act, can be properly regarded as a *cause*. Without liberty, it is true, there can be no action and no effect; but the liberty merely furnishes the opportunity or sphere of action: it is in no sense a cause from which the effect flows. The sole cause, then, of moral evil is, according to this theory, what Dr. Williams calls passive power; and this he defines to be "that natural defect which exists in a created nature as a contrast to the *natural* (not the moral) perfections of God" (p. 249). It thus appears that his theory is substantially the same as that of Leibnitz.

Dr. Wardlaw has devoted one of his lectures to an examination of Dr. Williams' theory;<sup>2</sup> and to this I refer you for a full discussion of the question. I content myself here with remarking on this hypothesis generally:—1. That it seems utterly incongruous to suppose that a cause which is not itself moral should produce a moral result. According to the hypothesis what Williams calls "passive power," and Leibnitz "original imperfection in the creature," is a purely natural power having no moral quality whatever. By what possibility then, we may ask, can it of necessity produce in a creature not already evil a bad moral effect? As Dr. Wardlaw has observed, "If there be no unholiness and no guilt but what is the result of choice, it is anything but self-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 398 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 93.



evident that what is good (without any evil tendency) should necessarily prefer evil; what is holy, sin; what is innocent, guilt." 2. In this hypothesis it is assumed that defect in the creature necessarily leads to evil. But if by defect is meant *faultiness* or *vitiosity*, the proposition that there is evil in the universe because of defect in the creature, becomes a purely identical one, tantamount to the assertion that there is evil because there is evil. If, on the other hand, by defect is meant mere *limitation*, then the assertion simply affirms that the creature is potentially evil; it in no way explains how that potentiality becomes an actuality, which is the real question at issue. The creature because of limited powers may be liable to sin; but it by no means follows from this he must of necessity sin. 3. On this hypothesis it seems impossible either to vindicate the divine equity or to maintain the moral responsibility of the creature. For the creature, being created by God, is as God has made him. But if God has made him so that he cannot but fall into evil if left to himself, how can the creature be held justly responsible for obeying this necessary tendency, or how can God be said to deal equitably if He first make a creature with a rational and necessary tendency to evil, and then treat him as guilty and punishable if he yield to this tendency? Dr. Williams has struggled hard to get over this objection and difficulty, but, as Wardlaw has, I think, conclusively shown, without success.

(iii.) In setting aside this hypothesis, we set aside the only one for which any show of reason can be adduced. We are therefore reduced to the necessity of admitting that the question, How came evil into the world? is by us insoluble. All we can say is that evil exists, and that God, for purposes known to Himself, permitted it somehow to enter His universe.

That this conclusion is burdened with serious difficulties it would be vain to deny. The question cannot but rise up in the mind, Why has God permitted evil if He is not the Author of it? The Epicureans of old propounded this dilemma: "Aut non vult, aut non potest tollere malum." Evil is here either because God does not will to remove it or because He is impotent to remove it; and men may say the same as to

His permitting it to originate. In either case we lose the true thought of God. If He has willed evil to exist, how can He be good and holy? If He was unable to prevent it, how can He be omnipotent?

This is a difficulty which human reason is unable to remove; nor does the Bible help us here by any of its revelations. The Bible, however, fully authorizes the only positive conclusions to which we can come on this dark subject. It certifies us that God is not the author of evil in any sense; that though able to prevent it, He has nevertheless permitted it to exist; and that though He has permitted it to exist, He neither directly wills it, nor regards it otherwise than with abhorrence. It is true we meet in the Bible with such utterances as, "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6). "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things" (Isa. xlv. 7); and there are some who lay hold on these, and are bold to affirm that "the older prophets and prophetic historians had not hesitated to derive even evil, moral evil not excepted, from Jahveh."<sup>1</sup> But in the Bible God is often said to do what He only permits to be done, or what comes to pass through His providential arrangements; and such statements as those above quoted are to be interpreted in accordance with the general teaching of Scripture, which invariably sets forth that though it is by God's will that evil is permitted, the evil itself is ever what is wholly unauthorized by Him, and wholly opposed to Him. He permits evil to exist, and He makes use of the evil that exists to accomplish His own purposes; but the evil does not originate with Him, and He ever regards it with abhorrence. From the Bible also we learn that the evil permitted in the universe is not only less than the good directly willed by God, but is characterized as something intrusive and transitory, while the good is real, fundamental, and permanent. Further, the Bible assures us that in permitting evil God has not left it uncontrolled or at the disposal of any evil power, but ever holds it in His own power, and will make it subservient to His purposes, so that ultimately a larger amount of good will be evolved than if

<sup>1</sup> Kuenen, *Religion of Israel*, iii. 40, E. Tr.



evil had not been permitted. In fine, we may rest assured that what is perplexing to us in the existence of evil arises out of the limitation of our faculties and imperfection of our knowledge; and that, as in the natural world many phenomena which to the untutored mind appear anomalous and inexplicable are by the philosophers seen to be in accordance with law and with the order of the universe, so the phenomenon of evil, which to us is so full of difficulty, may by higher intelligences—must by the Highest—be seen to be in full accordance with the noblest order and the purest rectitude. “If it be asked,” says Dr. Reid,<sup>1</sup> “Why does God permit so much sin in His creation? I confess I cannot answer the question, but must lay my hand upon my mouth. He giveth no account of His conduct to the children of men. It is our part to obey His commands, and not to say unto Him, Why dost Thou thus?” “Great,” says Lord Brougham,<sup>2</sup> “as have been our achievements in physical astronomy, we are as yet wholly unable to understand why a power pervades the system acting inversely as the square of the distance from the point to which it attracts, rather than a power acting according to any other law; and why it has been the pleasure of the Almighty Architect of that universe that the orbits of the planets should be nearly circular instead of approaching to or being exactly the same with many other trajectories of a nearly similar form, though of other properties; nay, instead of being curves of a wholly different class and shape. Yet we never doubt that there was a reason for this choice; nay, we fancy it possible that even on earth we may hereafter understand it more clearly than we now do; and never question that in another state of being we may be permitted to enjoy the contemplation of it. Why should we doubt that, at least in that higher state, we may also be enabled to perceive such an arrangement as shall make evil wholly disappear from our present system, by showing us that it was necessary and inevitable even in the works of the Deity; or, which is the same thing, that its existence conduces to such a degree of perfection and happiness upon the whole as could not even by omnipotence be secured without it; or, which is also the same

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Active Powers*, Ess. iv. ch. xi. Works by Hamilton, p. 634.

<sup>2</sup> *Dissertations appended to Paley's Natural Theology*, vol. ii. p. 73.

thing, that the whole creation as it exists, taking both worlds together, is perfect, and incapable of being in any particular changed without being made worse and less perfect?"

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## CHAPTER VII.

### SIN.

#### III. THE NATURE OF SIN.

There is no subject on which it is of greater importance that we should have just views than the subject of sin, its nature, its source, and its guilt. By our views on this subject all our views of the Christian system will be modified. According as we regard sin shall we regard deliverance from sin, and the proper method by which that deliverance is to be effected. If we err on the first of these points, we can hardly fail to err also on the others. The mind does not willingly retain doctrines as parts of the same system which do not fundamentally agree. If an error be adopted and retained on one point, it will be almost sure to insinuate its poison so as to corrupt all that surrounds it. And especially if we adopt an error on any point which comes first in order in a connected series of opinions, there is hardly a possibility of escaping error on subsequent points in the series. Hence, in point of fact, wrong conceptions of the nature of sin will be found to lie at the basis both of infidel systems and of those false forms of Christianity which affect the vital doctrines of religion; whereas, on the other hand, a sound evangelical theology has always had its root in a just and scriptural view of the nature of sin.

Nor is this merely a question of theoretical interest; it has also an intimate bearing on the practical interests of Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ is a scheme for destroying sin, first in the individual, and then through him in the race. To those who embrace it the great duty of their life comes to be to fight against sin and seek its destruction in

themselves and others. Sin is their great antagonist, which they are by all means to resist and to overcome and to keep under. But how shall they effectually do this if they do not understand aright what sin is? What soldier can contend successfully if he know not the kind of enemy he has to deal with? or what can be expected but disaster, and it may be defeat, to the general who is misled by wrong, by partial, or by unfounded intelligence respecting the resources, arrangements, and designs of his antagonist? If, then, the practical Christian would prove himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ, he must begin by ascertaining aright what is the nature and qualities of sin—that great adversary from which Christ came to deliver man, and against which he as a follower of Christ has to contend.

i. *Description of Sin in 1 John iii. 4.*

Now to this question the Apostle John gives us a very brief but most explicit answer: *Πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ποιεῖ καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία* (1 John iii. 4). Here we have both the *subjective* and the *objective* presupposition of the possibility of sin. The subjective presupposition is that man can do that which is *ἁμαρτία*, sin; that is, that man has a capacity of distinguishing right from wrong, and that he can choose to do wrong and will to do it—in other words, that he is a moral agent endowed with conscience and will, and so responsible for his conduct. The objective presupposition is that there is a law under which man is placed, which he is under obligation to obey, and which exists independently of his will and choice. Of this law sin is pronounced to be the transgression, or rather sin is *ἀνομία*, lawlessness; a term which embraces not only positive violations of the law, but also failures and omissions in respect of any of its precepts, in short, all departures from it, whether by going athwart it or by falling short of it.

The law, then, conditions the possibility of sin. Were there no law there would be no sin properly so called. As St. Paul says, "Where no law is, there is no transgression;" and again, "Sin is not imputed where there is no law" (Rom. iv. 15, v. 13). A free agent utterly without law might do

what was morally wrong, *i.e.* what is contrary to the divine nature, but for him it would not be sin. Nor, on the other hand, even where there is a law does the transgression of it become sin save on the supposition that the transgressor is a free moral agent, knowing the law and willing to transgress it.

With this definition in view we have only, in the first place, correctly to understand all that it implies, and, in the second place, to perceive its accordance with the general testimony of Scripture and the facts of our own consciousness to realize to ourselves a just and full and satisfactory answer to the question, *What is sin?*

(i.) In proceeding to expound this definition, the first thing to which I ask your attention is the recognition it makes of a distinction between the concept of lawlessness and the concept of sin. The proposition "sin is lawlessness" is not a mere identical or explicative proposition; it is ampliative and definitive of the just idea of sin: in other words, it implies that sin may be conceived of otherwise than as lawlessness. Now, this is true. Sin may be viewed merely as *evil*, as a thing which we cannot approve of, as an unlovely thing, or as a thing which is attended with unpleasant consequences. But under none of these aspects does sin necessarily involve the idea of lawlessness, from which it follows that when it is positively said to be lawlessness something more is told than already lay in the idea of sin. We must understand St. John, then, as meaning to tell us that *sin* is something more than merely evil or unlovely, that its essence lies in its want of accordance with a law, that it always *has reference to a law* as that by which its character is determined, and that though apart from a law there may be evil, apart from a law there can be no sin.

(ii.) It enters into the idea of law that it should be something enacted and rendered imperative on those who are under it. Law is something more than order: it is authoritative order. It not only enunciates something good; it also commands and enjoins that good. It properly assumes the form of an imperative direction, with a threatened penalty in case of transgression. It is only in a secondary and derivative sense that this term is used to denote some general fact or principle, as when we speak of the laws of nature, by which

we mean the great general principles according to which Nature carries on her operations; though even here the idea of imperativeness is not altogether excluded, because in construing these general principles we tacitly assume that the power of the Creator has been exercised in impressing upon matter that constant conformity to these general principles which we speak of as obedience to the laws of Nature. "By creating His materials endued with certain fixed qualities and forms, the Divine Author of the universe has impressed them in their origin with the *spirit*, not the *letter*, of His law, and made all their subsequent combinations and relations inevitable consequences of this first impression."<sup>1</sup> Even in the case of a law of nature, then, the idea of authority and imperativeness is preserved; and this, which is a fundamental idea of law, comes forward into primary importance in all laws which are designed to regulate the conduct of intelligent and moral agents. A law for them is an enactment which they are bound to obey. It is a positive injunction which they are authoritatively called to follow. We cannot conceive of a law for such which does not essentially involve and primarily set forth this idea. Abstract the notion of imperativeness from the law, and of corresponding obligation on the part of the agent, and the idea of law disappears altogether. The party may still act in the way the law prescribes, but he does so not in virtue of the law, or from regard to it, but for some other reason with which the law as law has nothing to do. When, therefore, sin is spoken of as a transgression of the law, or as lawlessness, it means not only that sin is an unlovely thing, but that it is also of the nature of rebellion to a lawful authority—that it is not only an act of disorder, but also an act of disobedience.

(iii.) A law implies a lawgiver—a superior authority from which the enactment emanates, and by which it is upheld. Now, in the case of Man and the law under which he has been placed, this authority is God. Man's condition as a creature implies that he is under law to God. Just as he must use the material universe as he finds it subject to a fixed ordinance imposed upon it by the fiat of the Creator, so must he himself, as a part of God's creation, regulate his

<sup>1</sup> Herschell, *Discourse on Nat. Phil.*, p. 37.

conduct according to those laws under which the will of God has placed him. It is true it is not the mere will of God—the *merum arbitrium Dei* of the schoolmen—which constitutes the distinction between what is right and wrong in a moral point of view: that distinction finds its ground in the Eternal Mind itself—in the unchangeable nature of Jehovah. But though the will of God is not the basis of rectitude and goodness, it is that by which rectitude and goodness are made known to us and made incumbent upon us. Man can never be, strictly speaking, a law to himself. The law that binds him must be something out of himself—something above himself. Through whatever medium he may acquire a knowledge of that law, whether from the constitution of his own moral nature, or from perceiving the relations of things, or by direct revelation from God, the law itself can be resolved only into the will of Him by whom the moral nature of man has been made such as it is, by whom the relations of things have been ordained, and from whom all revelations of moral and religious truth come. When sin, then, is said to be a transgression of the law or a dereliction from it, we must regard it as an act of disobedience against God, whose will the law enunciates. Sin, therefore, is not merely evil, it is not merely disorder, it is disobedience against God—an act of virtual rebellion against Him as the great Moral Governor of the universe.

(iv.) Sin as lawlessness includes not only positive violations of the law, but all that comes short of conformity to it. In the definition of sin given in the Shorter Catechism, it is described as “any want of conformity to or transgression of the law of God;” and this twofold aspect of it is held by almost all who have written on the subject.<sup>1</sup> For such an opinion there appears the best grounds. If God impose upon His intelligent creature a law or a rule of action, it seems to be equally a departure from that law whether the creature does what the law forbids or omits to do what the law enjoins; and if the former is to be treated as an act of dis-

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard: “Peccatum seu ἀνομία est aberratio a lege, sive non congruentia cum lege sive ea in ipsa natura hærat, sive in dictis, factis, ac concupiscentiæ motibus inveniatur.” Calov.: “Illegalitas seu difformitas a lege.” Reinhard: “Absentia convenientiæ cum lege.” *Dog.*, p. 267.

obedience and rebellion, the latter surely should be treated as such likewise. To affirm otherwise would seem to lead to the monstrous conclusion that if God enjoins anything as good, we can sin only by doing something the opposite of that; there is no sin in wilfully falling short of it: so that, *e.g.*, if He command a creature to love Him with his whole heart, that creature would sin only if he hated God, not if he failed to love Him, or came short of loving Him supremely. A doctrine like this is not only dangerous, but apparently utterly unreasonable. It has therefore been all but universally repudiated by all theologians; nor would it be necessary to dwell upon the subject were it not that a very serious use is sometimes made of the doctrine, viz. that though a creature cannot reach such perfection as the law embodies, he may yet live without sin if he only does not transgress the law, and if he do his honest endeavour to come up to the law,—a doctrine on which the Papal scheme of works of merit and supererogation rests. In support of this doctrine an ingenious objection to the view above contended for has sometimes been propounded. It is this: If, it is said, this principle holds good of man, it must hold good in reference to all God's intelligent and moral creatures; it must hold good, therefore, of those who are sinless. Now, those sinless creatures, being creatures, are not infinitely perfect,—that belongs only to God; they are therefore creatures who fall short of what is absolutely good and holy. But if a shortcoming from what is good be sinful, it follows that these are not sinless beings, and that there never can be sinless creatures, and that all advances in goodness and holiness being in reality *short* of perfect goodness and holiness, are nothing else than acts of sin. This reasoning has an air of plausibility, but that it is fallacious every one must feel; and it is not difficult to point out where the fallacy lies. The author of the objection has tacitly assumed that God can never impose upon any of His creatures a law which requires less than absolute perfection; for if it be posited that God may impose a law which demands only relative perfection, *i.e.* perfection relative to the conditions and capacities of the being on whom it is imposed, his objection loses all force, seeing in this case there may be a full coming up to the standard of the law and yet a coming short

of absolute perfection. Now that this is actually the case, and that what the objection has assumed is false, all reason and experience conspire to show. Of all the laws which God has imposed upon His intelligent creatures of which we have any knowledge, there is not one which exacts anything more than a relative perfection. Take, *e.g.*, the first great law of love to God. In this man is not required to love God as He in the infinitude of His being and perfections deserves to be loved, but only as far as man's capacity extends; he is to love God with all his heart, and strength, and mind; and he who does this is sinless so far as this precept extends. If man had a higher capacity, more of mind and more of might, then the degree in which it is now his duty to love God would be too low for what would then be required of him; but still it would only be relatively to his capacities that the law would be binding on him. It is the same with all God's laws: they are adapted to the nature and the capacity of His creatures on whom they are imposed; and it is reasonable it should be so: for how can we conceive of God imposing upon man a law which he never could fully obey, which came not nigh to him, within the range of his ordinary capacities, but stood afar, at an infinite reach above him? It is possible, then, for a creature to be sinless and yet come short of absolute perfection, even though the principle be held that a want of conformity to the law is sin; inasmuch as sinlessness consists not in conformity to the highest possible good, but in conformity to that degree of good which is inculcated by the law under which he has been placed, and is within the range of his capacities.

(v.) The law of God extends to the inner motive whence actions spring, as well as to the actions themselves. It is, indeed, in a moral point of view impossible to separate these two. The motive and the act constitute one moral whole; and though man can only judge this motive from the act, God who sees the inner soul of man, and searches his heart, judges the motive along with the act. Nay, even when the mental feeling does not give birth to a positive act, it has a substantive existence in His sight, and is weighed in the balances of His unerring judgment. It is impossible, therefore, for us to obey the law of God unless we obey it from the heart. An



act cannot be good whilst the motive from which it springs is bad. The commandment of God "is exceeding broad:" it reaches from the circumference to the centre of our active being; it aims at the regulation of all our thoughts and feelings as well as all our actions; and it may be transgressed as well by a wrong state of mind as by wrong words or wrong deeds.

ii. *The General Testimony of Scripture concerning Sin.*

Having thus expounded the statement of the Apostle John, I now proceed to show that the doctrine thus laid down is in full accordance with the general testimony of Scripture. Here I notice,—

(i.) The terms employed in Scripture to designate sin. Of these terms a few, such as *πονηρόν*, *κακόν*, *αἰσχρόν*, and the Hebrew *יָץ*, convey immediately the idea of the moral turpitude, the unloveliness and baseness of sin; but by far the greater part, and those most frequently used, are such as convey the idea that sin is the not doing on the part of man of something which by law and prescription he is bound to do. Sometimes it is presented as the missing of a mark which man ought to reach, or of the path he ought to keep, as in *ἀμαρτία* and *הֲטָא*, and their cognates; sometimes as a deflection from God's way, or recoil from God, as *פָּרַה*, from *סָר*, "to resile or draw back;" *עָלָה*, from *עָל*, "he turned aside;" and sometimes as lawlessness or guiltiness, *i.e.* liability to a legal penalty, as *ἀνομία* and *παράβασις*, with the Hebrew *רָשָׁע*, from *רָשַׁע*, which in the Hiphil signifies "to declare guilty of a breach of law," "to condemn," as, *e.g.*, Deut. xxv. 1: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come with judgment that they may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn (*וְהִרְשִׁיעַ*) the wicked." In all these terms we find the two fundamental ideas of, first, something man ought to do or to be; and, secondly, a failing on the part of man to perform that requirement. The idea of sin consequently shadowed forth by these designations is essentially that of the want of conformity to or transgression of a law. And the same is conveyed by those passages of Scripture which represent sin as something done against God;

for as God is the author of the law under which man is placed, as well as its administrator, every breach of the law must be an offence against Him, an act of godlessness and impiety as well as of disobedience. Hence such expressions as ἀσέβεια, παράπτωμα, and ὑψι, "rebellion" or "revolt," etc.

(ii.) The support this receives from other express statements of the word of God. Take, *e.g.*, the declarations of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (iii. 20): "By the law is the knowledge of sin," *i.e.* it is by the enactment of the law that what is sin is determined, and by its sentence that the transgressor knows he has sinned. Still more explicitly does Paul in the same Epistle reiterate the statement of St. John when he says (v. 13), "Sin is not imputed where there is no law,"—a statement which plainly intimates that sin takes its birth and being from the law of which it is a transgression, and that apart from the law there would be no sin. To the same effect are such statements as these, "Where there is no law there is no transgression." "Without the law sin was dead." "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (Rom. iv. 15, vii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 56). In all these passages the same great truth is set forth. Man is not only a being susceptible of moral impressions and capable of moral distinctions; he is directly and authoritatively under law to God, bound to obey His will, and subject to obligation to do that which is right and to abstain from that which is wrong. As God's creature he is the subject of a kingdom which has laws for the regulation of its affairs and penalties to be inflicted on those who are rebellious. Now, these laws man does not keep as he ought. Some things which God has commanded him to do he refuses or neglects to do, and some things which God has forbidden he persists in doing. There is thus a want of conformity on his part to God's law,—transgression and lawlessness; and this the Bible stigmatizes as sin.

(iii.) The account which the Bible gives of the first great sin which man ever committed places this truth in a clear light. That sin consisted, so far as the act was concerned, in the eating of a particular fruit which our first parents had been forbidden to eat. Now, wherein lay the sin here? Not in

the mere act surely : there was nothing immoral in that ; the eating of one fruit was *per se* as innocent as the eating of another. The sin lay in this act being contrary to God's express command ; in its being, therefore, an act of *disobedience* against God, and virtual rebellion against Him. Here then lay the essence of the first sin,—it was an act of lawlessness ; and it stands out with this single character of evil belonging to it at the head of all the long train of woes and evils which it brought into the world, an awful and memorable comment on the declaration that sin is the transgression of law.

(iv.) It is on this ground that sin may be righteously punished. That God should inflict suffering of any kind upon His intelligent creatures is a fact not to be contemplated without anxious and solemn feeling. Every thoughtful man will feel that there is a difficulty in the fact which there is a pressing urgency to have removed. Is it righteous in God to make suffering consequent on any wrong act ? Is it consistent with His goodness and beneficence to make physical calamity consequent upon moral evil ? These are difficult questions, and I apprehend we can steer our way to a solution of them only by keeping fast hold of the principle that it is not simply as moral evil that sin is punished, but because being morally evil it is the transgression of the divine law. It is of the essence of a law that it be enforced by penal sanctions ; and it is indispensable to the stability of a law that when the sanctioning penalty has been incurred it shall be inflicted. The punishment of the sinner, therefore, flows out of his position as under a law of which his sin is a transgression ; it comes to pass by the necessity of the case ; it could not be otherwise. Man as a creature is conditioned by law ; man as a moral creature is conditioned by moral law ; law to be law must be sanctioned by a threatened penalty to be inflicted on the transgressor, and when the penalty is incurred it must be inflicted, else the law will become of none effect. When man thus sins and is punished for it, this is no arbitrary act of the divine administration ; it is a necessary and unavoidable consequence of his sin being a transgression of the divine law. On this ground, therefore, may the punishment of sin by God be vindicated,—

on this, but not on any other; and hence there comes back from that suffering which is the penalty of sin a clear testimony of the truth that sin is the transgression of the law.

(v.) The doctrine of redemption by atonement rests for its vindication on this view of sin. For suppose man's sin to be merely an offence of a personal kind against God, the doing of something repugnant to His wishes, or merely a departure from moral order, it will not be easy to see what inseparable barrier lay in the way of his offences being forgiven without an atonement on his repenting and entering on a better course. A mere personal offence might have been forgiven on the representation of the offender; and as to sin being a breach of moral order, it is difficult to see why atonement should be made for that, or, indeed, what sense we are to attach to the expression "atonement to the moral order of the universe;" one might as well speak of making atonement to the physical order of the universe. It is only when we distinctly realize and represent to our minds the idea of government by law, and of sin as a violation of that law, and an act of rebellion against that government, that the necessity of an atonement for the pardon of sin becomes manifest. In that case it is at once seen that where sin has been committed and the penalty consequently of the law incurred, one of two things must happen if the law is to be sustained: either the sinner must endure the penalty he has incurred, or an atonement must be made for his sin which shall have the effect of making his forgiveness and release compatible with the claims and honour of the law. It appears, then, that unless we keep steadily before us the view of sin as a transgression of the law of God, we shall be unable to see clearly whence arose the necessity of an atonement for sin ere it could be forgiven. And here I may observe how, in point of fact, the theological systems of men are necessarily moulded according as they take or refuse this view of sin. If men think of sin simply as an infirmity or an error, deserving censure, it may be, but still more calling for pity and compassion; or if they view it merely in the light of an immorality, a departure from ethical propriety or the moral order of the world, a thing requiring to be put right, but not entailing any punishment

on the party who has gone astray,—it is easy to see that their views of redemption and of the relation of Christ to the sinner will be exceedingly different from those of the man who views sin as an act of transgression, a breach of the law which God, as the great Ruler, has given man to obey,—an act of rebellion against God, entailing upon the party committing it the charge of *guilt* in the sight of God, and exposing him to the penalty attached to the breach of that law, as legally his due. To the former, salvation means nothing more than rescue from evil; to the latter, it means also and primarily deliverance from guilt. The one thinks merely of escape from the discomforts and disadvantages of a weak moral nature; the other thinks primarily of pardon for damnatory offences as introductory to reconciliation with God and restoration to moral power and goodness. Into the mind of the one there enters simply the idea of moral rightness as constituting salvation; in the mind of the other there is prominent, as antecedent to that, the idea of legal righteousness or justification at the bar of God. Clearly, therefore, because these two persons set out from different views of sin, they have arrived at different views of salvation, different notions of what men are to seek in Christ; and the logical result of this will be an entirely different scheme of theology for the one than for the other,—so different that if the latter be right, the system of the former must not only be defective, but positively and perilously wrong.

A conviction of this was doubtless in the mind of the apostle when he was writing his Epistle to the Romans; and hence he labours so earnestly to lay the basis of his whole system in a demonstration of sin, so as to shut men up to a conviction of it, of its guilt, illegality, and penal effect especially. He felt he could proceed on sure ground in showing the nature and excellency of the gospel only as he could convince men of sin, so that every mouth might be stopped, and all flesh become guilty (*ὑπόδικος* = *reus*, *paenīs obnoxius*) before God. That accomplished, the way was clear for his setting forth God's way of justifying sinners and so saving them. It was only as he could make it manifest that all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, that he felt there was any use in telling men how they might be

justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

From all this we may see the importance, both in our theology and in our preaching, of right views of sin as a transgression of the divine law, entailing guilt, condemnation, and punishment.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### SIN.

#### IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF SIN.

Our previous investigations have conducted us to the conclusion that sin is, as the Shorter Catechism defines it, "any transgression of or want of conformity to the law of God," and as such an act of rebellion against God. In ascertaining this, however, we have not ascertained all that it concerns us to investigate on this subject. There is a point beyond this which requires to be reached. For—1. As all man's volitions spring from some predominant principle and tendency in his nature, the fact that in thought, word, and deed he transgresses the divine law must have its source in some predominant principle within him. There must be some *principium et fons* whence these impure streams flow, and to which they are to be traced. And having ascertained the character of the stream, we are anxious to discover to what this is to be traced; just as if, on analysing the waters of a river, we found them marked by certain physical peculiarities, we should feel solicitous to discover whence these peculiarities arose. By a sort of psychological necessity, therefore, we are urged from investigating the nature and characteristic quality of sin to inquire into its principle and source in man's nature. Then, 2. In observing man's conduct, we perceive that the acts which constitute his sins are not only multitudinous in point of number, but also extremely diversified in point of

character. We find them differing in various aspects—in respect of object, of character, of compass, and of kind; and yet all are classed under the head of sins, and legitimately so. There must therefore be something in common to them all, some principle which pervades them all, something from which we can abstract everything also belonging to the act, and yet leave that by which it is constituted a sin. The mind is naturally urged to investigate this something; and we cannot say that our induction is at all complete until we have found it. 3. When we have laid down the position that “sin is the transgression of the law,” we cannot long regard it without the question arising, Is it the mere transgression of the law, in and by itself, that constitutes the evil of sin? Assuming that it is as a transgression of law that sin is dealt with, and that it is under this aspect that we must contemplate it in relation to God’s dealings with sinners, both in reference to the punishment of sin and in reference to the remedial provision of the gospel; the question will still press upon us, What is it that makes this transgression of the law an evil, and causes it to be so abhorred of God? Evidently there must be something in the inner nature of man, something that amounts to a severance of the bond between God and him, something that violates the relations that ought to exist between them, involved in the act of transgression which makes it so hateful to God. To Him in the infinitude of His being the mere act must be a matter of small moment, a simple turning to the right hand rather than the left on the part of one of His creatures, which in itself would be infinitely beneath His notice. It must be something involved in the act, some spiritual principle from which it springs, which, if we may so speak, by disturbing the relations between the Father of spirits and the soul of His creatures, grieves and offends Him. What that something is it obviously concerns us to discover if we can.

As illustrative of these statements, and in part confirmatory of them, we may select the instance formerly cited, that, namely, furnished by the case of our first parents. The act by which they fell was the taking and eating of a particular fruit. This in itself was a purely indifferent act; there is no moral principle involved in the eating of one kind of fruit



more than another, viewed simply in itself. This act became a sin, because it was the transgression of God's precise injunction forbidding them to eat of the fruit of that tree. But that act on their part arose from, and was the index of, a particular state of mind; it was but the outcome and result of an internal working; and in this lay the real principle of their transgression—the spirit, of which the act was the form and utterance. Further, it is only in this that we can see a point of community between their act as sin and the act (say) of their son Cain when he slew his brother. Both acts were sins, and yet in form and outward manifestation the two are wholly distinct. Wherein do they resemble each other? At what point do the two lines cross so as to give a point common to both, in virtue of which they are both included under one head? To investigate this we are naturally prompted, and the answer to it can be found only in our discovering the principle, common to all sin, from which the two sinful acts, so differing in all outward characteristics, sprang. In fine, Wherein lay the intrinsic evil of this act? What was there in it to make it so hateful in the sight of God? Granting that the rebelliousness of the sin and its enormity as a transgression of the law which God had enjoined demanded its punishment, it remains to ask, Whence arose the odiousness of it so that God, who cannot look on sin, abhorred and hated it with a perfect hatred? The proper answer to this will be found if we can discover the real principle of sin—the inner operative cause of transgression.

On this inquiry we now enter; and, as preparatory to it, there are two questions of a preliminary kind on which it may be desirable that we should bestow some attention, viz.—1. What is the psychological law of man's acting? and 2. What is the vital principle of moral goodness or personal holiness, the opposite of sin?

#### i. *The Psychological Law of Man's acting.*

In regard to this, I must content myself with simply enunciating and briefly illustrating certain positions.

(i.) The actions of men are determined by their volitions.



As we will so we act; that is to say, when we are free to obey the impulses of the will, when no extraneous force constrains our actions. This is sometimes called freedom of will; but properly it is freedom of action—liberty to act as we will.

(ii.) The will is determined by motives. We choose to do that which we are moved by certain inducements to prefer.

(iii.) The general law is, that what appears to us the strongest motive determines our choice, determines our volition. To this position it has been objected that, in point of fact, men do not always obey the strongest motive; that, for instance, men are seen obeying impulses which are positively weak, foolish, and wicked, in the face of the strongest reasons for an opposite course. But this objection is doubly fallacious. For 1. It confounds motives with reasons. These two are not the same. A reason does not become a motive until it is felt; and consequently, whilst there may be the most potent reasons why a certain course of action should be preferred, these may never act as motives on an individual, simply because they are not felt by him, or only feebly felt. And 2. This objection is irrelevant; it involves an *ignoratio elenchi*. It proceeds on the assumption that what is said to determine the will is what is the strongest motive, whereas what we assert is that the will is determined by what *appears* to be the strongest motive. These two are not always the same. We all know that a man may resist the strongest motive simply because another presents itself with greater power, *i.e.* appears stronger to him. It is not by what things are, but by what they appear to be, that our choice is determined. We may bring the strongest motives to bear on a man, but if he meets us with the reply, "I cannot *see* it," we feel that it is in vain to urge him further. As our proposition is, that it is what *appears* the strongest motive that determines the will, it is irrelevant to object that sometimes what *is* the strongest motive determines the will.

(iv.) The light in which motives appear to us is determined not only, perhaps not so much, by what they are in themselves as by what is lent to them by the mind itself. The mind of man, it is to be ever kept in view, is not a dead

or inert substance ; it is vital and active, and each mind has its own personality. In no case, therefore, do we see things exactly as they are nakedly and *per se* ; the mind always lends some tinge or hue from itself to them as they are perceived by us ; and what is lent by one man may differ very much from what is lent by another. Hence differences of conception, of taste, of belief in regard to the same objects among different men. This applies also to motives. No motive acts pure and simple on the will ; every one derives from the mind through which it passes a peculiar tinge and character by which its effect on the will is affected, it may be powerfully affected.

(v.) The hue which the mind lends to motives, and by which they are made to appear strong or otherwise so as to move the will, is derived from various sources. It may be due to natural constitution, or to acquired habit, or to fixed opinion. Thus the child of a drunkard may have derived from his parent a constitution which strongly predisposes him to intemperance, *i.e.* causes the motive to indulgence in intoxicating drinks to appear much stronger to him than it does to a man of another constitution ; or a man may, from the habit of sensual indulgence, have his mental eye so jaundiced that he gives a wrong colour to objects of this class ; or a man, from a strong and established opinion, may lend to some motives a force which does not really belong to them, or refuse to others that which is their due. Hence it is that men are found putting sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet, good for evil and evil for good.

The bearing of these remarks on our present object must be obvious. We are in search of the *principle* of sin ; and these remarks show that, according to the constitution and laws of our nature, that principle must be something which biasses the will in favour of transgression—something in the mind which lends to the motives to transgression an attractive hue, and makes them appear stronger than the motives to obedience.

## ii. *The Principle of Moral Goodness.*

The other point on which it is desirable that we have

settled views respects the vital principle of moral goodness or holiness. As this is the opposite of sin, it is obvious that if we can determine it we shall be thereby guided directly to that of which we are in search.

(i.) Your studies in Moral Philosophy have already made you acquainted with the varied answers that have been given to the question, What constitutes virtue or goodness? To enter at any length into the examination of these answers would lead me too far from my proper field; it will be sufficient for my present object that I generally describe and classify them, and then advert particularly to such as may seem more strictly theological in their character.

The differences of opinion on this subject are not so much differences as to the *nature* of virtue or goodness viewed subjectively, as to the *basis* and *essence* of goodness viewed objectively. Virtue in the subject—in the moral agent of whom it is predicated—all will agree in regarding as the love and practice of goodness, *i.e.* of objective goodness. The point awakening difference and dispute is respecting this objective goodness, on what it rests, what it is that constitutes it. Now, discounting entirely at present the answers of the sceptical school, who maintain that there is no real, qualitative distinction between right and wrong, but that these are terms descriptive merely of certain prejudices or accidental or convenient distinctions which men have made, just as they have made certain conventional arrangements in matters of business courtesy, the answers which have been given to this may be ranked in four classes:—

1. Those which place the basis of moral goodness in the *moral nature of man*; whether they proceed from the school of Hutcheson, who taught that we possess a moral sense which is at once the organ and the criterion of moral truth; or from the school of Brown, who taught that goodness is that which by the constitution of the mind we immediately approve; or from the school of Smith, who taught that goodness is that with which we perfectly sympathize, in other words, that which by the constitution of the mind we fall in with when we see it exhibited by others.

2. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *beneficial results of actions*; whether they confine these results

to such as affect the temporal interests and physical comforts of the race, or extend them so as to include all that constitutes the true happiness of man.

3. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *mere will of God*.

4. Those which place the foundation of goodness in the *Divine Nature*, and find in the constitution of the human mind, the relations of society, and the fitnesses of things so many revelations or unfoldings of that which in its intrinsic majesty and glory no man hath seen or can see.

Of these classes we may dismiss the first two with a very few remarks. With regard to the first, I would observe that its advocates appear to me to be involved in a vicious circle; for they seem first to answer the question, Why is this good? by saying, Because the human mind in virtue of its natural constitution approves it; and then to answer the question, Why does the mind approve this? by saying, Because it is good. A thing is thus made the reason of itself; and goodness is represented as at once the cause and the effect of approval. With regard to the second, its great vice appears to me to lie in this, that it confounds the *basis* of virtue with the *motives* to virtue. If I wish to *induce* a man to be good and virtuous, I may very effectively appeal to the benefits which will flow to him and to society from his following such a course; but these benefits no more constitute the virtuousness of the course suggested than the good effects of a medicine constitute the curative qualities of that medicine. These qualities reside in the medicine itself, and are to be traced to the wisdom and benevolence of the Creator who implanted them there; whilst the benefits accruing from the use of the medicine are to be set down simply as effects resulting from its possessing such qualities. In like manner the benefits resulting from virtuous conduct are not the source or measure of its virtuousness, but merely the effect of qualities belonging to the conduct, and which exist in it independent of any effect it may produce. And just as I may labour to induce a person to take a certain medicine by detailing its good effects and tendencies, so may I seek to induce to virtue by a similar appeal. To place the virtuousness of the act, therefore, in such beneficial

tendencies is to confound the foundation of virtue with what is only an excellent motive to virtue.

The opinion which places the foundation of goodness in the will of God is one which in a theological course may be thought deserving of a somewhat fuller consideration; for to those who have not carefully reflected on the subject it often appears as if this was an opinion which as Christians we are bound to support, and it is one which the statements of Scripture have sometimes been supposed to favour. I can only, however, stay to offer on it a very few observations.

In the outset it is important to notice what the question before us really is. It is not as to whether the revealed will of God be a perfect *development* of moral truth—a perfect *representation* of rectitude and goodness; for on this point both sides are agreed. Nor is the question whether the revealed will of God should be made by us the *test* and *standard* of rectitude and goodness; for here also both parties are at one. The question before us is, Does the revealed will of God *constitute* goodness and rectitude? in other words, Are actions and feelings in themselves morally indifferent, and do they become right or wrong simply and primarily because they are commanded or forbidden by the law of God?

Now, when this question is fairly presented to the mind, it cannot fail to strike us that there are undoubtedly *some* things of which this is true, some actions and feelings which take their moral character solely from their relation to a law forbidding or enjoining them. But is this true of *all* the objects of moral judgment? If so, what becomes of the distinction between positive duties and moral duties? To the moral consciousness of man this distinction is most palpable. No man ever made the mistake of confounding the two. They are as distinct in the human mind as the ten tables of stone, graven by the finger of God and containing the Decalogue, were in the Mosaic legislation distinguished from the rest of the Law written by Moses. But what becomes of this distinction if all morality be resolved into enactment and prescription? In this case what we call a positive law stands on exactly the same footing as what we call a moral law. Both are enacted, and if it is enactment which *pro-*

*duces* moral rectitude, the one is not more moral than the other. All duties in this case then are moral, and all are positive. To steal is wrong, for no other reason than to omit baptism is wrong; to rob and murder, for no other reason than to neglect going to church! Against such a conclusion as this the moral judgment of all men would rebel; for all feel that the former are wrong inherently, whilst the latter are wrong because contrary to prescription.

It is further to be observed that to resolve all morality into the will of God is to deny the *essential* distinction between vice and virtue. If it be the will of God which constitutes the one bad and the other good, then apart from this will they were neither the one nor the other; and as it was a mere arbitrary will which made them differ, what we now call virtue might have been made vice, and what we now call vice might have been made virtue. According to the supposition, here are two acts equally destitute *per se* of moral character; but God, for no reason but in pure arbitrariness, enacts that the one shall be done and the other avoided; and out of this alone, it is alleged, arises the goodness of the one and the badness of the other: who does not see that the case of the two might have been reversed, and that the same arbitrary will which made the one good might have made it bad, and *vice versa*? I have heard it said, in reply to this, that God could not do this, for He can never command anything but what is good. True, but irrelevant; for the question is not whether God can enjoin anything but what is good, but whether it is His injunction alone which *produces* the goodness belonging to that which He enjoins. The objector, in fact, concedes what he pretends to deny; for in asserting that God can enjoin only what is good, he implicitly admits that there is a source of moral distinction apart from the divine will, and antecedent to any utterance of it. If I say God enjoins what is right because it is right, nothing can be more manifest than that I admit that rectitude exists antecedent to any injunction of God's will concerning it; otherwise I should make rectitude at once the *cause* and the *effect* of the divine command.

Once more, it may be observed that to regard rectitude as produced by the mere will of God is to affirm that God wills

and enjoins virtue as to be preferred to vice without any reason. It could not be because the one was morally excellent that it has been enjoined, and because the other is morally evil that it has been forbidden, for by the supposition it is the simple injunction or prohibition that makes them either the one or the other. Their moral character is acquired *after* and *in consequence of* the divine declaration regarding them; it could not therefore form the reason for that declaration. In the eye of God, it is assumed, that previous to His enjoining the one or forbidding the other, neither possessed any moral character. Why then, it may be asked, did He prefer the one to the other, and say to men, "This is good, and that is evil"? No reason can be assigned; the whole must be resolved into what the schoolmen have called the "*merum arbitrium Dei*,"—the arbitrary will—the unreasoning decree of God; in other words, that in this matter God acted without reason or motive, and simply from a blind impulse or unintelligent caprice. No one who has any just views of God can entertain this opinion; and as this is a just and necessary consequence of the doctrine which resolves morality into the mere will of God, that doctrine, though often maintained with a view of honouring God, must be set aside as really incompatible with His glory.

(ii.) Rejecting these theories of the basis of moral rectitude, there only remains that which finds this in the *divine nature*—in the essential perfection of the Almighty. God is essentially good and holy. He cannot but be so. To conceive of Him as otherwise would be to conceive of something which is less than God—which is not God. He is good, not because He wills or chooses to be good, but because goodness is His essence, and by the necessity of His nature He cannot but be good. Hence all that He wills is good, for He must ever will in accordance with His own perfect nature; and as all the relations of His intelligent creatures, all the order and constitution of nature, all the fitnesses and utilities of things have been fixed and appointed by Him, conformity to these becomes good because in reality conformity to the perfect mind of God of which they are the utterance. In the constitution of the divine mind, then,

we find the basis of goodness—the ultimate reason of the inherent and inflexible distinction between right and wrong, as well as between true and false, lovely and odious.

Now, having found the basis of goodness, it is easy to find the *principle* of goodness in moral agents. It is simply a harmony of feeling on the part of the agent with the basis of moral excellence—a love for, a complacency in, a clinging to the one great foundation of goodness and truth. Wherever this feeling exists it will become a principle of holy living—a continual and vital spring of goodness and virtue.

This complacency in God is what the Bible intends by that love to God which it inculcates as the first of all excellences and the source of all virtue. Theologians have, indeed, disputed whether love to God be properly the disinterested affection of love to Him for what He is, or the grateful affection of love to Him for what He has bestowed. Into this question I do not intend to enter at present, further than to observe that the proper answer to it will depend altogether upon the connection in which the question is asked. It must be admitted on all hands that both affections may exist in a creature towards the Creator—both the affection of complacent delight in his infinite perfections, and the affection of responsive gratitude to Him for His boundless beneficence. But though both these principles may exist in the same mind, they do not operate to exactly the same results. If it be asked, What is it that operates in an angel to make him delight to do the will of God? the proper reply, I take it, would be, his grateful love to God—that sense of deep obligation which he experiences in consequence of the innumerable tokens he has experienced of the loving-kindness of the Lord. If, again, it be asked, What is the principle which operates in the bosom of a holy creature and leads him to rejoice in God's perfections and aim at conforming himself to God? the proper reply, I take it, would be, not his sense of gratitude for favours received, but his complacency in the divine nature itself as revealed to his mind. Now these considerations may guide us to the conclusion that the love to God which is the source of holiness is love to Him for what He is, not love to Him for what He



has done. This alone can be strictly called a *holy* principle,—the other is rather the *natural* state of a well-ordered mind under the circumstances.

The vital principle of true holiness, then, we take to be, Love to God for what He is—sincere, pure, adoring complacency in that perfect excellence which essentially and eternally belongs to Him. Out of this all holy feeling and acting spring. This is the element which distinctively confers holiness or moral goodness on any act or purpose—which raises any above the level of the merely natural or becoming, and constitutes it holy and good. “God is not only the chief object of human love, . . . but the *absolute and all-embracing object of this love*, so that every other love is holy and imperishable only by being taken up into love to God.” Our love to man must be subordinate to this; even as it is from man’s relation to God that he becomes a claimant for love from us. We act aright only as all our actions have a respect to God—only as in whatever we do we do it to His glory.

(iii.) Before proceeding further it may be desirable to show the accordance of the conclusion we have reached with the statements of Scripture upon the subject. And here we cite—

1. The injunction which commands us to be holy, as God is holy, and perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect. The meaning of such injunctions obviously is not that the holiness of the creature is to *equal* that of the Creator, for this is impossible; the meaning must be that holiness in the creature must be of the same kind as holiness in the Creator; the latter must be the norm and standard of the former. In order, then, to ascertain what holiness in the creature is, we have to inquire wherein consists the holiness of God—the perfection of God; and in answer to this, the view which Scripture teaches us to take of God, as finding in Himself the reason and end of all His doings, leads us to the conclusion that holiness in Him is just the consistency of all His actions with Himself, and that the principle of holiness in Him is just the complacency which He has in His own infinite and eternal excellence. He can see nothing better, nothing more lovely than this; and whatever his eye rests on with complacency in any of His creatures is but the reflection or

emanation of this. If this, then, be holiness in God, the holiness of His creatures—which is to be of the same kind as His—must be the accordance of their volitions and actions with the divine nature, arising from a complacent delight in that nature as revealed to them.<sup>1</sup>

2. Again, our Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us in the N. T. as the perfect model of all holy excellence for man. What then, let us ask, was the life-principle of His conduct? what sustained it, animated it, and gave it its peculiarly holy character? We have His own repeatedly expressed authority for saying that it was love to God—love to the Father. It was that the world might know that He loved the Father, and that as the Father gave Him commandment so He did; that He was obedient unto the death, and went forth to meet the prince of darkness in that last tremendous struggle; and as this principle actuated Him in the great closing scenes of His life, so was it the animating principle of all that had gone before. To glorify God on the earth, to vindicate His majesty and His claims, to manifest His truth to men, to do His will, and to finish His work,—these were the objects which our Lord continually placed before Him as the grand ends for which He had come into the world. Everything was postponed or subordinated to these. “Not my will, but Thine be done,” was the maxim of His life and

<sup>1</sup> “Quando Deus se ipsum amore purissimo amare concipitur, ut simul ab omni imperfectione remotus, secretus, separatus censeatur, amor ille vocatum sanctitas.” Buddeus.

Bengel extends the meaning of the term so as to comprehend “omnia illa attributa quæ simul sumpta conceptum Dei quidditatem exhaustiunt.” These he regards as embraced under the term קָדוּשׁ, and adds, “De Deo itaque, ubi Scriptura nomen illud קָדוּשׁ enunciat, statuo non denotare solam puritatem voluntatis, sed quicquid de Deo cognoscitur et quicquid insuper de illo, si se uberius revelare velit, cognosci possit adeo ut vocabulum קָדוּשׁ ex impositione divina vere sit inexhaustæ significationis.”

“The holiness of God flows from the love which He has for Himself, and in the exercise of which He shows Himself in all His affections in exact conformity to His own perfect nature.” Venema, *System of Theology*, p. 161.

That the word includes more than moral purity is evident from such applications of it as in the phrase “The Holy One of Israel,” with whom none can be compared, and as in Ex. xv. 11, “Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” and Ps. xcvi. 1, where “the arm of His holiness” is joined with “His right hand” as the instrument by which “He hath done marvellous things.”

the rule of His conduct. Hence the perfect complacency with which Jehovah regarded Him. He was His well-beloved Son, in whom He was ever well-pleased. He kept the Father's commandments, and so abode in His love. Now, in all this, as He is our example and model, so does His example teach us that in love to God lies the germ and principle of all true obedience and holy acting.

3. What our Lord's personal character and conduct exemplified His teaching distinctly expressed. Nothing can be more precise and satisfactory than His answer to the youthful Pharisee who asked Him, "Which is the greatest commandment?" Our Lord's reply was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. xxii. 36-39). And, lest it should be supposed that these two commandments were signalized merely as of prior importance,—as the first amongst many which might be ranked after them as of the *same class*, though of inferior urgency,—our Lord adds, "On these two commands the whole law and the prophets hang," intending thereby to teach us that all religious and all moral duty are wrapped up in these, as the tree is included in its seed, or the manifestations of activity in sentient creatures are included in the vital principle. In love, then, according to our Lord's teaching, lies the principle or germ of moral goodness. Without this all conformity to the law is merely outward and pretentious; it is dead, having no real moral life, no real moral loveliness in it; whereas, on the other hand, when sincere love to God dwells in the heart, it will lead to all moral goodness in the soul and life, just as naturally as the vital principle in a sentient creature leads to activity, or a germ unfolds itself, under favourable conditions, in the verdure and fruitfulness of the tree.

Our Lord's words, I have said, teach that love to God is the central and germinating principle of all moral goodness. To some it has appeared as if our Lord here lays down *two* co-ordinate principles of holy activity—love to God and love to man; and His words are often quoted as authorizing the opinion that these two principles stand on the same footing as constitutive principles of goodness, though the latter be

less solemn and urgent than the former. Our Lord's words, however, carefully considered, not only give no sanction to such a view, but in reality set it aside. Not only does He call love to God ἡ μεγάλη καὶ πρώτη ἐντολή,—the absolutely great and first commandment, whilst love to man, including ourselves, is described as simply *resembling* this—not equalling it, but merely being *like* it, ὁμοία,—but it is important to observe that He expressly teaches that we are to give to God a whole and undivided love. We are to love Him with *all* our heart, and *all* our soul, and *all* our mind. It is evident that whatever love we may legitimately entertain to ourselves and to our fellow-men cannot be co-ordinate with, but must be subordinate to, the love we render to God; in other words, the latter, as the principle of *all* good, must embrace and comprehend the former in so far as it is good. If all my inner being is to be absorbed by love to God, it is abundantly evident that I can find place in it for love to any of His creatures only in so far as that is included in and produced by love to Him. If I love myself or my fellow-creature in such a way as to subduct from God any portion of my heart and soul and mind, I manifestly transgress, or at least fall short of, the first and great commandment; and from this nothing can be clearer than that I can keep these two commandments only by subordinating the second to the first, and loving the creature in and through the Creator. But if all moral goodness be included in germ and principle in these two commandments, and if the latter be included in the former as a corollary is in its propositions, it follows that our Lord's words must be regarded as announcing that the one grand, all-embracing, all-securing principle of goodness is love to God.

4. In the writings of the apostles we find the same promise given to love as the root and spring of all true goodness. We need only cite such passages as the following: 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3, "And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of God," *i.e.* love to God not only directs a man to the right knowledge of all that it concerns him to know in relation to God, but renders him also an object of the divine knowledge, and thereby of the divine teaching. So, in writing to the Romans, Paul, after

enumerating the beneficial effects of a state of justification through faith, traces all to "the love of God shed abroad in the heart" (Rom. iv. 5),—where it does not greatly matter, for our present object, whether we understand by the phrase "the love of God," God's love to us or our love to God, because in the former case it is only as a sense of God's love diffused in our souls by the Holy Ghost awakens within us a corresponding emotion of supreme and all-subduing love to Him that it can operate in the way of producing Christian virtues in us. The same may be said of the apostle's expression, "the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. v. 14), where, if we understand by the love of Christ His love to us, as is most probably the meaning of the phrase there, it is yet only as that love is realized by us as a subjective impression, and produces in us a corresponding love to Him, that its constraining power can be felt by us. To the same effect also is that sublime passage of the apostle, Eph. iii. 17–19, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." In this passage the apostle traces the spiritual life to its true and only origin, union with Christ by faith; but he at the same time specifies the element by the action of which spiritual vitality is sustained and spiritual progress secured. That element is love; and it is by being rooted and grounded in it that we are to scale the heights of divine attainment, and go steadily forward so as at last to be filled with all the fulness of God. In a similar sense may we understand that passage, which is not without its difficulties, in Eph. iv. 15, *ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ*, etc. The interpretations which have been given of this passage are very many; but the apostle's meaning seems to be this: It is not desirable that Christians should be like children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine; and for the purpose of preventing this the great Head of the Church has made provision for the instruction and edification of the Church, that all its members may come together in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

What, then, is the becoming and profitable state for the Church to be in? It is *ἀληθεύοντες*, etc., literally, "that holding the truth, or being truthful, in accordance with the truth, we may by love increase in all things towards Him who is the Head," etc. As if Paul had said, Christ has made all this provision for the edification of the Church, that they may be supplied with that truth which is the proper nutriment of the soul, and may be confirmed in that love which is the source and spring of all Christian virtue and godliness.

5. I only add here, that we may legitimately borrow for our present purpose all those passages in which the apostles inculcate love to the Christian brotherhood as the fulfilling of all Christian duty; for, as they ever regarded love to the brotherhood as an offshoot and product of love to God,—just as in the family the mutual love of the children has its root in their common love to their parents,—so whatever they ascribe to the inferior and derived principle must be referred ultimately to the primary and all-embracing one whence it sprang.

### iii. *The Principle of Sin.*

Having thus ascertained with some degree of certainty what is the vital principle of moral goodness or holiness, we are in circumstances to answer the question for the sake of which this inquiry was entered upon, viz. what is the principle of sin in the heart of man? The answer to this must be, that as sin is the antithesis of holiness, and as the principle of holiness is love to God, the principle of sin must be the negation of this—the absence of love to God, or estrangement of heart from Him. It is not necessary that this should amount to positive hatred of God; it is enough that the heart be destitute of supreme love to God, having no complacency in His holy character, no delight in His favour, and no desire for His glory.

With this accords the lesson which the apostle teaches in Rom. i. 21–23, where he traces all the degeneracy of the heathen world, all its idolatry and deep moral degradation, to an alienation of heart from God. They began their course of evil by being irreverent and unthankful,—not glorifying God as God, withholding from Him that admiration, adoration,

and love which the infinite perfection of His character demands, and refusing that grateful acknowledgment of His mercies which the multitude and graciousness of these mercies justly claim. And having this alienation of heart from God, they naturally did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and hence, says the apostle, it is that they were given up to a reprobate mind, and fell under the sway of all those unhallowed influences which gradually immersed them ever deeper and deeper in the foul abyss of sin and uncleanness. It was not that they *had* not the knowledge of God, it was not that they *could* not retain that knowledge, it was simply and solely because they did not *like* to retain it, that they lost it, and so were led to change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things, and were left to become the prey of all lawless lusts and passions and desires. Like a ship which had lost its rudder, they were driven helplessly whithersoever the winds and waves of passion or evil example carried them.

I prefer regarding the principle of sin as simply alienation from God, or want of holy love to God, to attempting the determination of any positive tendency or feeling in which it may be supposed to consist. It is true that we thus rather lay down a negative than establish a positive principle of action; but this, instead of being regarded as an objection, is rather perhaps to be looked upon in the light of a recommendation, inasmuch as sin being in itself rather a negative than a positive state,—just as darkness is the mere negation of light, and cold the mere negation of heat,—the principle appropriate to it is rather a negative than a positive one. Those who have sought to fix a positive principle of sin have either concluded on selfishness, *i.e.* the undue love of self, or on creature-love, *i.e.* the undue estimation of any created objects, ourselves included, so as to prefer them to God, or to withhold from God that which belongs to Him. Now, that both selfishness and undue attachment to the creature are sinful is at once conceded, but whether either can be properly regarded as constituting the positive principle of sin may be more than doubted.

If we were required to choose between these two views,

the latter certainly appears the preferable, not so much because it includes the former, as because it avoids an objection to which the former is exposed. For if all sin be resolved into selfishness, we must either conclude that every act of man is a selfish act, or hold that there are some acts which man in his fallen state can perform that are without the stain of sin. Of this alternative the advocates of the selfish school would accept the former side; for by them it is maintained that all the acts of man are either directly or indirectly, either grossly or by a more refined process, the results of selfishness; and in this conclusion some who do not professedly belong to the selfish school in ethics seem inclined to concur. But against such a doctrine the moral consciousness of man revolts, and it is one which will not abide the test of facts. It is no doubt true that pleasure attends the performance of that which we desire to perform, and that sometimes we act purely for the pleasure resulting from the act. But is it not preposterous to affirm that we *always* so act,—that the child, for instance, who for the first time in its existence comes in contact with sorrow, and desires to relieve it, does so not from a natural sympathy, but from a refined calculation as to the selfish pleasure to be derived from the relief of the suffering,—that the mother who sacrifices ease, health, perhaps life itself, for her babe, is all the while only seeking a refined self-gratification,—that the man who at the call of friendship imperils his liberty, his property, his reputation, his life, rather than desert the cause of one to whom he is attached, is not moved by any generous principle, but is all the while only offering incense at the shrine of self-love? To maintain such a position would be to read human nature backward, and to contradict some of the strongest convictions of the human heart. We all know and are sure that there are other principles of action by which we are swayed than selfishness. We know that we often desire the happiness of others, without the slightest thought of any reaction from the gratification of that desire of a pleasurable kind upon ourselves. Indeed, the very fact that we desire pleasure from the gratification of the desire, shows that the desire must have existed as a generous and unselfish emotion antecedent to the performance of the act. For suppose I relieve



the wants of one in poverty or suffering, either the generous desire to do that person a kindness prompted me, or I was, as the selfish school teach, induced thereto solely by a desire to enjoy a personal gratification. Let us suppose the latter. In this case it follows that I had no generous desire to relieve another previous to the act. Whence then, I ask, the gratification derived from the act? Who does not see that if there be any gratification derived from the act it must be because that act gratified a desire to relieve the distressed, and that this and not any calculation of selfish gratification was the motive prompting to the act? This selfish system, then, contains in itself its own confutation: on its own showing the antagonist doctrine is correct.

As a matter of psychological science, then, we cannot resolve all our actions into selfishness. It follows from this that if selfishness be the essential principle of sin, and if, consequently, no act can be regarded as sinful which cannot be traced directly to selfishness, many of the acts of man even in his fallen state, and whilst at enmity with God, must be regarded as sinless; nay, it would follow that whatever love and reverence man withheld from God, if he only did not expend that upon himself, but bestowed it generously on his fellow-creatures, he would nevertheless be innocent of sin in this. With such a conclusion our Lord's doctrine, that we are to love God with our *whole* heart and strength and mind, is, as we have seen, clearly incompatible. It must therefore be at once rejected, and with it the doctrine that selfishness is the essential principle of sin.

The more general principle that the essence of sin, or moral evil, lies in the undue love of the creature in general, is not exposed to any such objection as this. It has consequently been that principally embraced by theologians.<sup>1</sup> I am nevertheless inclined to think that this may, with greater propriety,

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc enim peccabam quod non in ipso, sed in creaturis ejus, me atque ceteris, voluptates, sublimitates, veritates querebam; atque ita irrueram in dolores, confusiones, errores." Augustin, *Confess.*, lib. i. § 31.

"Propter universa hæc et hujusmodi peccatum admittitur, dum immoderata in ista inclinatione cum extrema bona sint, meliora et summa deseruntur, tu Domine Deus noster, et veritas tua, et lex tua." *Ibid.*, lib. ii. § 10.

"Animum enim peccati arguimus cum eum convincimus, superioribus desertis, ad fruendum inferiora præponere." Augustin, *De lib. arbit.*, l. 3, c. 1.

be regarded as a primary result or manifestation of this principle rather than the principle itself. Man must love something ; he is destitute of the supreme and all-embracing love of God ; he therefore turns from the *summum bonum* to the *minus bonum* ; he gives to the creature what is due only to the Creator. This perversity, however, is not itself a primary principle of action ; it has a cause in the antecedent alienation of heart from God ; and in this therefore would we place the principle and vital source of sin.

This estrangement from God will come into conscious manifestation as soon as the will of God comes into collision with any of the lusts and passions of our nature. As love to God will show itself most evidently in the ready and joyful submission of the human will to all that God enjoins or appoints, so the absence of this will display itself most naturally in resistance and repugnance to the divine will. The first and most immediate effect of it is in producing a state of untruthfulness, of error, and darkness, and wrong judging in the mind. Men alienated from the centre of truth and light become immediately darkened in their minds and given up to vain imaginations, so that they put good for evil, and evil for good. A further step in this downward course is to put the creature in the place of the Creator, and at the head of all creatures to place self as the supreme object of devotion. Hence, though to resolve all men's actions into selfishness be false philosophy, it remains an undoubted fact that of the positive sins which men commit nearly all may be resolved into some form or other of selfishness. The dominant principle in man becomes his emotional nature, and that in itself alone, unregulated by sound judgment and reason. As the apostle describes it, "Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin" (Jas. i. 15). This is the true genesis and history of evil in our world.

This serving of self and of the creature may exist to a large extent without any conscious aversion of the mind from God. But this arises not from any real love lurking in the heart to the source of all good ; but simply because the mind has the power of abstracting from all thoughts that are unpleasant to it, and hence, not *liking* to retain God in its knowledge, simply ejects the thought of God altogether from

the circle of its ideas and feelings. Hence the Bible represents men in their natural state as not so much haters of God as simply without God—*ἀθεοι*, not *ἀντίθεοι*—as those that forget God—in all whose thoughts God is not. But though there may not be a conscious repugnance of mind to God, all the while a process is going on which is increasing the native alienation of the heart from God, and which needs only some occasion of collision between the man's lusts and God's expressed will to bring it forth in all the odiousness of full-grown hatred and hostility to the Most High.

And as the principle of sin is thus ungodliness, so the great end which Christianity aims at accomplishing in man is the restoration to man's heart of that great regulative principle of his moral nature, that great fountal source of all real goodness in man, love to God. The consummation of Christianity in a man is when in life he lives unto the Lord, and in death dies unto the Lord, that whether living or dying he is the Lord's, so that through eternity he shall be wholly and for ever with the Lord.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SIN.

#### V. KINDS OF SIN.

Though all sin has essentially the same nature, and proceeds from the same evil principle, there are different forms under which it presents itself to observation. Hence theologians have been led to classify sins according to certain differential qualities as follows:—

i. In respect of their immediate object—that against which they are immediately committed—we have—

(i.) Sins against God; also sins against the first table of the law, *peccata primæ tabulæ Decalogi*.

(ii.) Sins against our neighbours. } *Peccata secundæ tabulæ*

(iii.) Sins against ourselves. } *Decalogi*.

ii. In respect of the law of which they are a transgression—

(i.) Sins of commission — *Peccata positiva quæ committuntur adversus legem vetantem.*

(ii.) Sins of omission — *Peccata negativa, quæ committuntur adversus legem jubentem.* Comp. Matt. xxv. 42–45, “Inasmuch as ye did it *not* ;” Jas. iv. 17, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

There is here perhaps a want of sufficient precision. Every positive act of sin is a breach of a law which forbids that sin, but it is also a breach of a corresponding law which enjoins the opposite good. On the other hand, every omission of good which the law enjoins is not necessarily a breach of the law which forbids the opposite evil. We cannot commit evil without omitting the antagonist good ; but we may omit good without necessarily committing the antagonist evil, *e.g.* one cannot tell a lie, which is a breach of the law forbidding falsehood, without at the same time breaking the law which commands and speaks the truth ; but one may omit to obey the law which commands to show kindness to all men, without directly breaking the law which forbids us to do injury to any man. We must distinguish these here, and say that all sins of commission are also sins of omission, but all sins of omission are not also sins of commission. And we must distinguish, further, between a law of primary obligation and a law of secondary obligation. By the former, we mean one which directly arises out of our relation to God, and which is always binding ; by the latter, we mean a law arising out of our relations to our fellow-men, and which is binding only under certain conditions. Now, in reference to the former, there is no distinction between a sin of omission and one of commission ; every omission of the commanded good is a commission of the prohibited opposite evil, and *vice versa*. In reference to the latter, there is a distinction between sins of omission and sins of commission, to the extent that though the commission of a forbidden evil is also of necessity the omission of the opposite good, the omission of a commanded good is not necessarily the commission of the opposite evil.

iii. In respect of the compass of the act itself, there are—

(i.) Inward sins, *peccata interna, sive cordis, ἐπιθυμία πορνῆαι* : all such tendencies and emotions as oppose, or are

inconsistent with, the law of God—evil thoughts, lusts, and passions.

(ii.) Outward sins, *peccata externa, sermonis et operis*—all words and deeds which transgress the law.

iv. In respect of the party charged with them, there are—

(i.) Sins directly committed by himself, *peccata propria*.

(ii.) Sins committed by others in which he partakes, *peccata aliena, permissionis, participata*.

This distinction is founded on such a passage as Rom. i. 32, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," or consort with them that do them; and 1 Tim. v. 22, "Neither be partakers of other men's sins." But neither of these passages seems to authorize the distinction. There is undoubtedly a distinction between sins which we ourselves commit, and sins which we are pleased to see others commit; but in the latter case the sin, *quoad nos*, is not in the thing actually done, but in the approval which we bestow upon the doing of it; and this is as much a *peccatum proprium* to us as the doing of the act is a *peccatum proprium* to the party committing it. Then, as to the apostle's caution against our becoming partakers of other men's sins, his meaning plainly is, that we are not to sanction, authorize, or encourage other men to do wrong, inasmuch as we thereby become participators, as it were, in the sins which they commit. But in this, as in the former case, the sinful part of the act, *quoad nos*, lies in what we really do, viz. the sanctioning of what is wrong, or the permitting a person to do what we know to be wrong. The sin of an act, as an act, belongs wholly to the person committing it; the sin that attaches to others, in the case supposed, accrues from their regarding with satisfaction that sinful act, or the encouraging to the commission of it by their sanction. In fact, the reason of the thing forbids such a distinction as this. There is no such thing as a sin chargeable on a party which is not *peccatum proprium* to that party. If he can truly say, "I did not do it, another did it," he says what completely removes from him the charge of that sin. He may, indeed, approve and consent to it, or sanction and encourage in it; and in so far he is guilty of sin; but the

sin of which he is guilty is his own sin, viz. the transgression of God's law, which he has committed in approving of what is evil, or sanctioning what is wrong; of the evil done, or the wrong committed, the sin rests wholly on the party who acted in the case. We would set aside this distinction, therefore, as one altogether unfounded.

v. In respect of intention on the part of those committing them, there are—

(i.) Voluntary sins, *peccata voluntaria*, προαιρετικά, *quæ deliberato consilio committuntur*.

(ii.) Involuntary [unpremeditated] sins, *quæ non deliberato consilio committuntur*. These may be—

1. Sins of ignorance, transgressions of an unknown law, and that either (1) helpless ignorance, as where the law has not been revealed [these are properly not sins at all. Comp. John xv. 22, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin"]; or (2) ignorance that may be overcome, as, e.g., that of the Jews in crucifying Jesus, "I wot," says Peter, "that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts iii. 17); and that of Paul in persecuting the Church, "I did it," says he, "ignorantly and in unbelief" (1 Tim. i. 13). In both these instances, however, the ignorance was culpable, because it might have been helped.

2. Sins of rashness or precipitancy, into which a man falls from the suddenness of the temptation. To such Paul refers when he says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault," etc. (Gal. vi. 1).

3. Sins of infirmity arising from the influence of physical causes. Comp. Matt. xxvi. 41, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"Voluntary" sins would be more properly called premeditated sins. All sin is voluntary. It is a fundamental principle in ethics that neither viciousness nor virtuousness can be predicated of any act if it be not voluntary. "Nunc vero," says Augustine, "usque adeo peccatum voluntarium est inaleum ut nullo modo sit peccatum si non sit voluntarium."<sup>1</sup> If the party apparently performing the act be not acting in accordance with his will, he really ceases to be an agent; he becomes passive in the hands of another; and the act, so far

<sup>1</sup> *De Vera Relig.*, xiv.

as he is concerned, possesses no moral quality whatever. The apostle, indeed, uses the words *ἐκουσίως ἁμαρτάνειν* (Heb. x. 26), but he is speaking there of apostasy. He that, knowing the natural result of such sins, runs into them with his eyes open, virtually rejects the gospel, and for him there is no second Saviour.

vi. In respect of enormity and punability, there are—

(i.) Clamant sins, *peccata clamantia vel manifesta*—such as those of which Paul speaks when he says, “Some men’s sins are open or manifest beforehand (*πρόδηλοι*), going before to judgment” (1 Tim. v. 24). Sins of this class are such as, whether men may punish them or not, the righteous judgment of God will be sure to overtake those who have committed them. Comp. Gen. iv. 10, xviii. 20, xix. 13; Ex. iii. 7, 9; Deut. xv. 9; Jas. iv. 4.

(ii.) Non-clamant sins, *peccata non clamantia, muta, quæ Deus longanimitate sua dissimulat et tolerat*. Comp. Acts xvii. 30.

(iii.) Mortal sins, *peccata mortalia, or mortifera*. Comp. 1 John v. 15–18. These, as distinguished from venial sins, are commonly described by Protestant divines as sins committed deliberately by the regenerate, and which destroy spiritual life; while the latter are sins of rashness, etc. So far as this is true, it coalesces with the following.

(iv.) Sins of greater or less aggravation. Matt. xi. 24; Luke xii. 47; 1 Tim. v. 8.

(v.) Sins remissible or irremissible. The only irremissible sin is that against the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 31. Comp. Mark iii. 28; Luke xii. 10; Heb. vi. 4–6.

“Clamant” sins have been enumerated in the mnemonic verse,

“Clamitat ad cælum vox sanguinis et Sodomorum.  
Vox oppressorum, mercesque retenta laborum.”

As in this distich Ex. xxii. 23 seems to be overlooked, the second verse has been altered by some, thus,

“Vox oppressorum, viduæ, pretium famulorum.”

Perhaps, better still, thus,

“Oppressi ac viduæ mercesque retenta laborum.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Bretschneider, *Handbuch*, ii. p. 11, sec. 119; Hahn, *Lehrbuch*, p. 416.

## CHAPTER X.

## SIN.

## VI. THE SOURCE OF SIN.

Having considered the fact of man's sinfulness, and the nature, principle, and modifications of sin, it now comes in course that we should ask, Whence this fact? To what are we to trace the universal sinfulness of the race?

i. *General Considerations.*

Now, as sin is the same thing in all men, its essential principle and manifestations being the same in all, it must be regarded as something adhering to our nature in our present state of being. Were it not so, we should either find some men who are not sinners, or some whose sins spring from a different principle from that which lies at the source of those of others.

Further, the fact that all sin, both in act and in principle, is the same as that sin by which our first parents fell,—viz. in act, a transgression of the law of God; and in principle, alienation from God,—is a fact which, if it does not suggest, certainly falls in with the conclusion that the first sin has had something to do with the production of all that have followed.

Once more, if sin be the same thing in all men, and therefore something adhering to our nature as at present existing, it must be something which is either added to that nature in each individual man immediately by God, or it must be something which accrues to each man in consequence of the connection of all men with the common source of the race. Besides these two, there is no way in which we can suppose that a quality belonging to the nature of all men could have come to be attached to that nature; nothing but community of derivation, either directly by God or by connection with a common head, being adequate to account



for a quality belonging to all men. The former supposition, however, is altogether incredible, and must therefore be rejected, inasmuch as it would make God directly and immediately the author of sin. We are therefore shut up to the latter, and must trace the universal sin of men to their connection with the first man, Adam. We do not at present express any opinion as to the *nature* of that connection; that will be subsequently investigated; we simply indicate the conclusion, that to a connection of *some* sort with the original man the sinfulness of the human family must be traced.

## ii. *The Testimony of Scripture.*

What these general considerations thus render probable is placed beyond doubt by the testimony of Scripture.

(i.) The sacred historian of man's origin and early experience, after telling us that man was made in the image and likeness of God, tells us that his son Seth was begotten by him "in his own image and likeness." It would not be competent for us to lay much stress upon this expression by itself, but when it is considered that this expression only occurs here, that it occurs on the first occasion that seems suitable after the narrative of Adam's fall, that it enunciates a marked contrast with what the historian has previously described as the original state of man, and that there seems no reason for its being introduced here, except to mark that man no longer comes into being in the image and likeness of God, but now bears the image of his sinful and fallen parents,—there seems strong ground for concluding from this passage that an intimation of no very doubtful kind is conveyed in it of a connection between Adam's sin and fall and the sinful and corrupt nature of his posterity. This is confirmed when we find the apostle describing the natural condition of men as a bearing of the image of the earthly (1 Cor. xv. 49). The most natural and satisfactory explanation of this is, that an allusion is made in it to man's natural condition, as a result of the descendants of Adam being born in his image and likeness, and no longer in the image and likeness of God.

(ii.) There are many passages which distinctly assert that sin is connatural to man: Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21; Job xv. 14, 15,

vii. 20 ; Ps. li. 5 ; John iii. 6 ; Rom. vii. 14, etc.<sup>1</sup> None of these passages, it is true, asserts any connection between man's sin and that of Adam ; but they all more or less clearly intimate that sin is not an accident that befalls this man or the other, not something which is conveyed to man from external sources and grows upon him wholly from without, but something which operates from within, something which is in man as man, something which, if not of the nature of a *vitium originis*, is at least the result of a privation of which all men are the subjects ; and as this can belong to all men only in virtue of their being descended from a common stock, these passages implicitly support the position now before us.

To the same effect is that remarkable expression of the apostle, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3). Here the being by nature the children of wrath is described as the common condition of the race ; the Ephesians were so, "even as others," not by any peculiarity of their state or character, but because all men are so. As regards the phrase τέκνα ὀργῆς, it is best explained by reference to the Hebrew idiom, according to which a person was said to be son of any object or quality, when the object or quality exercised a dominant influence on his condition or state ; comp. בְּנֵי-הַמָּוֶתָה (Ps. cii. 21), *i.e.* persons delivered over to death, exposed to its attack ; οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός (Luke xvi. 8), *i.e.* persons under the illuminating influence of divine teaching ; κατὰρας τέκνα (2 Pet. ii. 14), *i.e.* persons under the curse of God. Thus taken, the phrase τέκνα ὀργῆς is much the same as if the phrase ὑπ' ὀργήν had been used, *i.e.* persons under wrath—the wrath of God. Now this, says the apostle, all men are φύσει, by nature, *i.e.* they become so, not by any external influence, ordinance, or power, but by an internal tendency which develops itself in them from their birth. It is impossible to attach to this any clear or consistent meaning but by understanding it of the native sinfulness of the human race, exposing them universally to the divine displeasure and consequent condemnation.

<sup>1</sup> On these passages see, on the one side, Taylor *On Original Sin*, and, on the other, the replies of Edwards and Payne in their respective treatises on this subject.

(iii.) The fact of a connection between Adam's sin and that of mankind is expressly asserted in several passages of Scripture. Isa. xliii. 27: "Thy first father hath sinned." This language plainly fixes our regards upon some *individual* as here referred to; and amongst individuals, our choice lies between Abraham, the progenitor of the Jewish people, and Adam, the progenitor of all men. But the reference to Abraham seems excluded by the thing predicated of the party here spoken of, viz. that *he sinned*. This must be looked on as emphatic, as constituting in some way a marked and peculiar fact in his history which distinguished him from others. Now this could not be said of Abraham. He doubtless was a sinner, but only just as other men are. He committed no special and peculiar sin which stands out in contradistinction to others as the sin of Abraham. His peculiar distinction among men is rather the eminent piety to which he attained than any eminent sin of which he was guilty. It was otherwise with Adam. The great event in his history is the sin he committed. This stands out from all other events recorded concerning him as the *peculiar* event of his history; and as it has acquired this character not so much from anything in itself as from its momentous bearing on the race, so it is most natural to understand such an expression as that of the prophet in the passage cited as referring to this. In this interpretation Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, and several others, whose conclusions are guided solely by hermeneutical reasons, and are not in the least swayed by doctrinal bias, concur.

In the New Testament there are two classical passages on this head, Rom. v. 12-21 and 1 Cor. xv. 45-47. In the former of these, the fact of a connection between the sin of Adam and the sinfulness of mankind is set forth in the most explicit terms: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, because all have sinned. By the offence of one many are dead; by the offence of one [there came] on all men [something which tended] to condemnation. By one man's disobedience the many were made sinners." In the context Paul also affirms that Adam was the type of Christ, i.e. the official position or relative character of the one bore an analogy to that of the other; and this the apostle still further illustrates by showing

that, as the conduct of the one has had results which extend beyond himself to others connected with him, so had the conduct of the other; and that as the results flowing from Christ's work are for the acquittal and redemption of His people, so those flowing from Adam are for the condemnation and destruction of those connected with him. With this stands closely connected Paul's allusion to the subject in the other passage referred to. In this passage Paul styles Adam and Christ the *first* and *second* man. Now, as he cannot intend by this that Christ was second to Adam either in order of time or dignity, he must intend to convey the idea that Adam and Christ sustain a character peculiar to these two, in which they appeared successively, Adam first and Christ second, and in which they *alone* appeared. Now the character peculiar to Christ, as we know from the whole of the New Testament, was the character of a public head or representative, in virtue of whose obedience those connected with Him are constituted righteous. It follows that if the position of Adam was the same, *mutatis mutandis*, with that of Christ, he must have occupied the place of one through whose sin all connected with him were constituted guilty or under condemnation.

On these grounds we may set it down as an ascertained truth of Scripture, that the sin of Adam is somehow connected causally with the sin of men universally. We have yet to inquire of *what kind* this connection is; in other words, how it is that Adam's sin has become the source of sin to the race.

### iii. *The Connection of Adam's Sin with that of the Race.*

To this inquiry different answers have been returned, the chief of which I shall endeavour to classify and state. They fall into two great classes, according as the effects of Adam's sin on his posterity are viewed as *Natural* or *Penal*.

(i.) Of the first there is—

1. The *Pelagian Hypothesis*. This, though bearing the name of Pelagius (Morgan?), a British monk of the fifth century, found its most logical expounder and defender in Coelestius, a pupil and friend of Pelagius. According to this hypothesis, no evil result flows to Adam's posterity from his

sin, except that which is inseparable from their being born into a world in which sin and misery already are; there is no penalty to which they are exposed, no *vitium originis* under which they suffer.<sup>1</sup>

2. The *Arminian* or *Remonstrant Hypothesis*. According to this, Adam is only the remote source of that natural propensity to sin which all men exhibit, the immediate source being each man's parents; so that sinfulness is propagated from Adam just as any other disease, defect, or morbid quality might be, the connection of mankind with him being simply that of natural descent. Death also comes on all men from Adam, not as a penal infliction, but simply as a natural inheritance.

It is, however, hardly just to Arminius to connect this opinion with his name; for, so far as he gave utterance to his views on the subject, he seems to have held that the consequences of Adam's sin to his posterity were *penal*. "Original sin," says he, "is not that actual sin by which Adam transgressed the law concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and on account of which we have all been constituted sinners, and rendered (*rei*) obnoxious or liable to death and condemnation."<sup>2</sup> But his followers of the Remonstrant party are very distinct in their announcement of the doctrine above imputed to them. Thus Limborch: "Mors hæc non habet rationem pœnæ propriæ diætæ in posteris; sed est naturalis tantum moriendi neccessitas, ab Adamo, mortis pœna punito in ipsos derivata." "Effectum peccati Adami in posteris est impuritas quædam naturalis, quæ tamen non est peccatum

<sup>1</sup> In the list of tenets for which Pelagius was condemned by the Council at Carthage in 412, there are the following bearing on the subject before us. He taught, "Adamum mortalem factum, qui, sive peccaret sive non peccaret, fuisset moriturus;" that "peccatum Adæ ipsum solum læsit, et non humanum genus;" that "Infantes, qui nascuntur, in eo statu sunt in quo Adamus fuit ante prevaricationem." It would appear that Pelagius himself thought his disciple went too far when he asserted that no harm had come to the race from Adam's sin: "Ipse dicit non tantum primo homini, sed etiam humano generi primum illud obfuisse peccatum, non propagine sed exemplo" (Augustine, *De Pecc. Orig.* c. xv.). He held, however, strenuously "ut sine virtute ita et sine vitio procreamur, atque ante actionem propriæ voluntatis id solum in homine est quod Deus condidit" (*ibid.* c. xiii.). See Noris's *Histor. Pelagiana*, etc.; Wiggers, *Versuch ein. Pragmat. Darstellung des Augustinismus und Pelagianismus*; Neander's *Church History*, iv. 313-322, Eng. transl.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, by Nicholls, ii. 375, 717.

proprie dictum ;” and again, “fatemur infantes nasci minus puros quam Adamus fuit creatus, et cum quadam propensione ad peccandum : illam autem habent non tam ab Adamo quam a proximis parentibus.”<sup>1</sup> Adam is thus only the remote source of man’s natural propensity to sin : to each man his parents are the immediate source, just as some remote ancestor may have introduced a disease into his family, but which afflicts each man only through his parents.

(ii.) The second class of answers which have been given to the question as to how Adam’s sin has become the source of sin to the race, embrace those who hold that the effects of his sin upon men are *penal*. These fall into two sub-classes, according as they retain or reject the doctrine of imputation.

1. We begin with the latter, under which we include the—

(1.) *View of some Socinians*. For the most part, the Socinians hold the view of Pelagius on this subject ; but some, and among them F. Socinus himself, hold that in consequence of Adam’s sin men are penally liable to death, not from any mortal effect in the sin itself, nor that man was created at first naturally immortal, but that in consequence of Adam’s sin his posterity have come penally under the actual power of death, to which naturally they are liable, but from which they would otherwise have been protected.<sup>2</sup>

(2.) *Identification Hypothesis*. According to this, Adam’s descendants are held to have been so identified with him that they sinned his sin, are guilty of his guilt, and fell in his fall. By some who use this language nothing more seems to be intended than that, as the apostle says, Levi paid tithes in Abraham, for he was in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him ; so the race sinned with Adam in the sense that they are involved in the consequences of his sin ; and it may be doubted whether any of those who have spoken as if they meant to identify the race with Adam in

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Christ.*, Bk. iii. c. iii. sec. 1, 4. See also Whitby, *De Imputatione Peccati*, and *Comment.* on Rom. v. ; Adam Clarke, *Comment.* on Rom. v.

<sup>2</sup> “Concludimus . . . ex peccato illo primi parentis nullam labem aut gravitatem universo generis humani necessario ingenitum esse, nec aliud malum exprimo illo delicto ad posteros omnes necessario manasse quam moriendi omnimodum necessitatem, non quidem ex ipsius delicti vi, sed quia cum jam homo natura mortalis est.” F. Socinus, *Prælect.* c. iv. Comp. Taylor, *Doct. of Orig. Sin*, Part I. pp. 51-55 ; *Par.* on Rom. v. 12.

his act of sinning, really intend their words to be taken for what they express. Their language, however, is such that we feel constrained to assign the opinion it utters a place in this scheme, and for want of a better name we have called it the Identification hypothesis.

"Manifestum est alia esse propria cuique peccata . . . aliud hoc unum in quo omnes peccaverunt, quando omnes ille unus homo fuerunt."<sup>1</sup> "Quia [Adam] . . . per liberum arbitrium Deum deseruit, justum iudicium Dei expertus est, ut cum tota sua stirpe quæ in illo adhuc posita tota cum illo peccaverunt, damnaretur."<sup>2</sup> "Ut cum omnes posterii ex primo parente seu ex radice ortum suum trahunt generis humani universitas cum stirpe non aliter quam unicum aliquod totum, sive unica massa considerari potest, ut non sit aliquid a stirpe diversum, et non aliter ab ea differunt posterii ac rami ab arbore. Ex quibus facile patet quo modo stirpe peccante omne illud quod ab ea descendit et cum ea aliquod totum efficit, etiam peccasse judicari possit, cum a stirpe non differat sed cum ea unum sit."<sup>3</sup>

(3.) Hypothesis of a *Vitium Originis*. In the opinion of many the effect of Adam's sin on his posterity as a penalty was to poison, pollute, vitiate their moral nature, or so to injure it that the lower propensities became strengthened against the higher powers, and thus man enters the world not only a fallen, but a positively depraved being.

"Ille in quo omnes moriuntur præter quod eis qui præceptum Domini voluntate transgrediuntur imitationis exemplum est, occulta etiam tæbe carnalis concupiscentiæ suæ tabificavit in se omnes de sua stirpe venientes."<sup>4</sup>

Some, whilst they repudiate this notion, that a positively vitiated nature has been entailed on men by Adam's sin, yet think that an increased susceptibility to evil has thence resulted in the race, or that his descendants have received such dispositions and affections as greatly incline them to yield to those inducements to sin in the world in which they are placed.<sup>5</sup> Some have gone the length of supposing the

<sup>1</sup> Augustin, *De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *De Corrept. et Gratia*, c. x.

<sup>3</sup> Stapfer, *Theol. Polem.*, i. p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> *De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 9.

<sup>5</sup> See Moses Stuart, *Comment. on Rom.*, v. 19.

forbidden fruit possessed a lethiferous and morally vitiating power, which has been transfused into the race by natural descent, and so has brought all under the power of depravity and death.<sup>1</sup>

Having stated the various opinions on the connection between Adam's sin and the race which has sprung from him, held by those who believe that the effects of that sin to men are *natural*, and by those who, though holding them to be *penal*, yet reject the doctrine of imputation, we now come to consider the views of imputation held by those who accept that doctrine.

2. The term Imputation, though of frequent use in systematic theology, like many other terms similarly employed, does not occur in Scripture. The cognate verb, however, is frequently used; and it is possible that the ideas intended to be conveyed by the term may be taught in Scripture, though the word itself is not to be found there. I propose therefore, in the first instance, to examine the usage of the *verb* in those passages in which it occurs, so as to obtain a just view of the ideas it is employed by the sacred writers to express; I shall then state the doctrine of imputation as held by systematic divines of different schools; and, in fine, I shall attempt to determine how far this doctrine is, in its various modifications, sanctioned and sustained by the word of God,—the only sure criterion by which theological opinion can be tested, the *Lapis Lydius* by which alone any dogma can be proved genuine and precious.

(1.) The English verb "impute," in our version, is represented in the original texts principally by the Hebrew verb נָשַׁב in the O. T., and by the Greek verb λογίζομαι in the LXX. and the N. T. In one passage (1 Sam. xxii. 15) where our version gives "impute," we have in the Hebrew a part of the verb נָשַׁב, "to put, place, or lay;" and with this verb, which frequently occurs elsewhere in similar connections where it is variously rendered in our version, we shall commence our examination. Take the following instances: Josh. ix. 24, "their blood shall be laid upon Abimelech;" Deut. xxii. 8, "that thou bring not blood upon thine house;" ver. 17, "and he hath given occasion against her;" Job

<sup>1</sup> See Knapp's *Christian Theology*, p. 239 ff.



iv. 18, "and His angels He charged with folly." In all these passages, the meaning of the word, though it is differently translated, is substantially the same. Blood is laid upon a man when he is made to bear the blame of shedding it, and is dealt with accordingly; so blood is brought on a house when a fatal accident, occasioned by its being insufficiently built, is held to be equivalent to an intentional offence on the part of the proprietor, and he is consequently made to bear the blame and pay the penalty of such offence; occasion is given against a person when something is laid to his charge which involves blame and exposes to suffering as a penal consequence; and beings are charged with any defect or crime when they are held blameworthy, or unworthy of commendation on account of it, and are treated accordingly. These usages of the verb *שׁוּב* in such connections all involve the same idea, that of holding a person to the penal or, at least, painful consequences of a certain act or state for which he is held to be blameworthy. We may infer, therefore, that in the passage where the verb, with an exactly analogous construction in the original, is rendered in our version "impute," this term has probably the same signification. And so we find it to be. It is Abimelech who, addressing Saul in that passage, says in reference to David's having been sheltered and aided by him, "Let not the king impute anything to his servant." The meaning plainly is, "Do not blame me and expose me to punishment for what has happened;" and the reason he assigns is, partly that he did not do what was laid to his charge, and partly that what he did for David was done in ignorance of his being in arms against Saul. To "impute," then, in this case is to adjudge blame to a man, and decree punishment on him for offences of which he is held to have been guilty; and not to impute is to exempt him from blame and punishment on the ground that he has either not committed the offence, or done it in such a way as to be morally blameless.

Let us now consider the usage of the verb *שׁוּב*, which is commonly rendered in our version by "impute."

According to Fürst, whose etymological renderings are usually very trustworthy, this word means primarily "to

bind;" hence as all thought is a putting of two or more notions together so as to arrive at a judgment, it came to signify "to think," and so it is frequently used in Scripture. Further, as all thought is a judgment, it came to denote the thinking, accounting, or declaring one thing to be another, a man to be so and so, or to have such and such qualities or characteristics. Hence, by a natural transition, it came to express the attributing or imputing such to a man; then, attributing to a man that by which such qualities are caused or produced; and finally, by the treating of a man, to whom anything is imputed, accordingly. As illustrative of this class of usages we adduce the following instances:—(1) Where it simply denotes the ascribing to a person of a certain quality or condition; 2 Sam. xix. 19: "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me," where Shimei, confessing what he had done against David, asks him not to ascribe to him the iniquity of that conduct, but to pass him by and treat him as if his conduct had not been iniquitous. So also Ps. xxxii. 2: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity (לֹא יִחַשֵׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עֲוֹן)," i.e. to whom Jehovah does not ascribe iniquity for what he has done, so as to hold him guilty and liable to punishment. (2) Where it denotes the ascribing to a person of something that produces a certain quality, though that quality does not actually belong to him. Lev. xvii. 4: "Blood shall be imputed unto that man;" i.e. the guilt which the shedding of blood causes shall be ascribed to that man; he shall be held guilty of murder, and treated accordingly, —that man shall be cut off from among his people. Num. xviii. 27: "And this your heave-offering shall be reckoned (imputed, יִחַשֵׁב) unto you as though it were the corn of the thrashing-floor, and as the fulness of the winepress," where the quality that would result from the presenting of the whole of the Israelites' produce to God is held to belong to him, though he presents only a tithe of it as a heave-offering; as it is afterwards expressed, "they shall bear no sin by reason of it, when they have heaved from it the best of it;" by offering this they were dealt with as if they had consecrated the whole. Under this head fall such passages as Gen. xv. 6: "And he believed in God;

and He counted it to him (imputed it to him, לִיחֲשֹׁבָהּ לוֹ) for (or as) righteousness;” and Ps. cvi. 31: “And that was counted unto him (Phinehas) for righteousness,” etc. (וַיִּחְשָׁב לוֹ לְצִדְקָה). These passages are best understood in connection with such a passage as Deut. vi. 25: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God as He hath commanded us.” Here is laid down a principle of the divine administration. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and will reward it. Now this righteousness is obtained normally by the keeping of His commandments. But in the case of Abraham his simple trust in God, and in the case of Phinehas his prompt and vigorous vindication of the divine authority, were held as tantamount to a meritorious obedience, and were consequently followed by the reward which God bestows on this.

The Greek equivalent to חֲשַׁב is λογίζομαι, and by this term is the former rendered by the LXX. in all the passages I have quoted. In the N. T. it occurs repeatedly in the writings of Paul. In Rom. iv. 3 we have a quotation of Gen. xv. 6, and in the 8th verse of that chapter a quotation of Ps. xxxii. 2. In the intermediate verses Paul repeatedly uses the verb λογίζομαι, and in our version it is sometimes translated “count,” sometimes “reckon,” and sometimes “impute.” The meaning, however, is in every case substantially the same. The apostle is showing that justification is not of works but of grace, and he argues from the case of Abraham that it is so. Abraham had found righteousness with God. How? By works? No; for then would he have ground for boasting before God, inasmuch as there would then have been ascribed to him merit, and the reward would have been of right or debt, and not of favour. Abraham obtained righteousness, i.e. a legal, meritorious claim to blessing, solely by favour; and how was this accomplished? By God’s taking an act of Abraham’s which had no legal merit in it whatever, and holding it as if it had, i.e. He gave Abraham blessing on the ground of what in itself gave him no title or claim to blessing. This Paul calls imputing righteousness to him; and in the same sense he explains David’s expression. His doctrine seems to be: Righteousness entitles a man to blessing; but God, in order to deal

graciously with man, who is destitute of righteousness, takes that which is not in itself righteousness, and holds it as equivalent in legal claim to righteousness, and on that ground gives blessing. So, on the other hand, when he speaks of God as not imputing sin, he plainly means that God does not ascribe to a man the quality or character which sin gives to a man,—in other words, regards and treats him as if that quality did not belong to him. Imputation is thus in Paul's sense the ascribing to a man of a position, quality, or title to which he has no real claim; and non-imputation is the ignoring or non-recognition of a quality, liability, or character that does belong to him. The *grounds* of imputation and the *effects* of imputation may differ in different cases; but the fundamental idea of the thing itself is the same in all, and is such as I have just expressed.

Except for illustration, it is unnecessary to adduce such a usage of the verb as we have in 1 Cor. xiii. 5, when the apostle says of *Agapè*, “οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν.” The sense here is not as our version gives it, “thinketh no evil,” but “imputeth no evil,” *i.e.* does not ascribe to a man the quality of evil when that does not really belong to him as an evil-doer; or does not treat an evil-doer as he actually deserves, does not hold his evil against him, but forgives it. This latter meaning seems the preferable one. It is that given by Chrysostom and Theodoret, and followed by Beza, Rückert, Meyer, and others. It is undeniably in this sense that the apostle uses the verb in 2 Tim. iv. 16, when, speaking of the conduct of some who had treated him unworthily, he says, “μὴ αὐτοῖς λογισθείη,” “may it not be imputed to them,” *i.e.* as our version gives it, “may this [their misconduct to me] not be laid to their charge;” may it not be held as attaching to them a quality such as shall bring penalty upon them.

The only other word used in the N. T. besides *λογίζομαι* in the sense of “imputing” is *ἐλλογέω*. This word, rarely used in the classics, occurs only twice in the apostolic writings, Rom. v. 13 and Philemon, verse 18. In the former, where Paul says, “Sin is not imputed when there is no law,” we have the word used plainly in the same sense as that in which he uses *λογίζομαι* in the 4th chapter: Whatever

be a man's conduct, the quality of guilt and consequent liability to penal consequences cannot be ascribed to him save where his conduct is a violation of law. In the latter passage the usage is somewhat different, and hence the passage is an important one for our present purpose. In writing to Philemon, Paul says (ver. 18), concerning Onesimus, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account (τοῦτο ἐμοὶ ἐλλόγει)." Here the meaning plainly is, "Let something belonging to him be ascribed to me, and exact of me the corresponding result, so that he may go free." No stress can be laid on the fact that the verb here is a part of ἐλλογέω, not of λογίζομαι, for the two are perfectly synonymous; or, if there be any difference, it can only be expressed thus, that while λογίζομαι is used much more frequently than ἐλλογέω, and used under different shades of meaning, ἐλλογέω is used only in the sense of imputing. That Paul regarded them as synonymous, the passage just cited from Rom. v. 13 clearly shows.

Having collated and sifted our instances, we are now in circumstances to declare the sense in which the sacred writers speak of imputation or imputing. In the general, it means the ascribing to an individual of a certain quality, either involving exposure to a penalty or entitling to a privilege, as the case may be. More specifically, and in view of the grounds on which the ascription is made, it signifies one of three acts:—(1) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which really belongs to him, on the ground that he is or has done something from which that quality accrues; or (2) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which does not belong to him, on the ground that he is or has done something which is held as equivalent to what would have conferred on him that quality; or (3) (in the singular case in the Epistle to Philemon) The act of ascribing to a man a quality which does not belong to him, on the ground that it belongs to another, and is transferred to the former from the latter for the advantage of the latter. These have been technically distinguished in various ways. The first has been called *imputatio moralis, sive facti*, because in it the actual doer of a deed is held to have done it *sua sponte*, and consequently to have merited the penalty or reward attached to it; whilst

the second and third have been denominated in contradistinction from this *imputatio regalis, sive juris*, because in them a privilege is conferred or a penalty adjudged by a simple act of regal or rectoral administration. In the former case, also, it is said that the word imputation is taken *improperly*, i.e. out of its just meaning, whilst in the latter it is said to be used *properly*. On these distinctions of appellation, however, it does not seem necessary to dwell.

(2.) I pass on now, therefore, to the second branch of my inquiry, under which it was proposed to state the doctrine of imputation as held by systematic divines. This will be best elicited by viewing it in connection with those special cases to which they have applied the term "imputation."

a. Theologians speak of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, the race of mankind as such. Thus, to begin with the divines of the Lutheran Church, Hollaz says: "The first sin of Adam . . . is imputed for blame and penalty to all his posterity truly, and by the just judgment of God."<sup>1</sup> Quenstedt says: "The fall of Adam, meaning thereby precisely his transgression in the matter of the forbidden tree, becomes ours by imputation alone."<sup>2</sup> Reinhard sums up the doctrine of the older Lutheran Church as follows: "The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is that judgment of God by which Adam's first sin is turned to the faultiness of all men."<sup>3</sup> By most later divines of the Lutheran Church the dogma is repudiated. So Döderlein, Reinhard, Hahn, Bretschneider, Wegscheider, Ammon, etc.

In the Reformed Church the doctrine has found almost universal acceptance. Calvin, both in his *Institutes* and in his *Commentaries*, repeatedly asserts it: "All can become guilty by the sin of one," says he, "only by the imputation of that sin."<sup>4</sup> Beza says on Rom. v. 12: "The apostle is treating in this passage of the propagation of guilt, in contrast with which the imputation of the obedience of Christ is set forth. Hence it follows that that guilt which precedes corruption is by the imputation of Adam's disobedience; as the remission of sins and the abolition of guilt is by the imputation of the obedience of Christ." Zanchius: "We

<sup>1</sup> *Exam. Theol.*, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Dogmatik*, § 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Didact.* ii. 53.

<sup>4</sup> *Instit.*, ii. 1.

say that that disobedience of Adam which was not ours in act yet as to the fault and guilt, became ours by imputation."<sup>1</sup> Turretine: "The question is whether the actual sin of Adam is so imputed in reality to all that on account of it they are held guilty, or at least are deemed deserving of punishment."<sup>2</sup> Marckius: "The cause of this corruption is the fault of Adam imputed to his posterity, as it is said in one all have sinned, and by the disobedience of one have many been constituted sinners."<sup>3</sup>

The following passage from Dr. Payne sets forth very clearly the doctrine on this subject held by many modern divines: "The imputation of Adam's sin to the race is not otherwise to be regarded than as the legal visitation upon the race of the consequences of that sin."<sup>4</sup>

b. Theologians speak of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of His righteousness to us. By the former, they mean that Christ, though Himself sinless, was regarded and treated as if He had committed the sins of the human race; and by the latter, they mean that we are regarded as having ourselves fulfilled the law and endured the penalty of sin, in consequence of Christ having done so. I shall quote here only the statement of Turretine: "Paul says that Christ was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, *i.e.* as the sins whereby we have violated the law are imputed to Christ, so the actions of righteousness by which He fulfilled it for us are imputed to us."<sup>5</sup> This latter part of the subject he more fully states elsewhere thus: "When, then, we say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us for justification, and that we, by that imputed righteousness, are just before God, . . . we mean nothing else than that the obedience of Christ, rendered to God the Father in our name, is so put to our account by God that it is really deemed ours, and that it is the one and sole righteousness on account of which, and by the merit of which, we are absolved from the guilt of our sins and obtain right to life."<sup>6</sup>

These passages may suffice to show in what sense the term imputation is used by theologians. With them it means the

<sup>1</sup> *De Redemptione*, i.

<sup>2</sup> *Medulla*, xv. § 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Loc.* xiv. qu. 13, § 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc.* ix. qu. 9, § 9.

<sup>4</sup> *On Original Sin*, p. 126.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* xvi. qu. 3, § 9.

ascribing to a person of a quality, with its attendant consequences, beneficial or penal, which does not properly belong to him, and which he has done nothing directly to acquire, but which has been acquired by another and transferred to him.

It will be seen at once that there is a material difference between the sense thus attached to imputation and that in which it is commonly used in Scripture. In seeking to determine precisely this difference, it is necessary to keep in view the distinction between the *act* of imputation and the *ground* of imputation. In respect of the former, the imputation of theology does not essentially differ from that of Scripture; in both cases (save where the imputation is an *imputatio facti* and as such *improprie*) it is an ascribing to a party of a quality which does not actually belong to him. But in respect of the latter, the only instance in Scripture which bears analogy to the imputation of theology is that of Paul when he asks the debt of Onesimus to be imputed to him; and even this case is not wholly analogous, for the ground of imputation here is Paul's voluntary susception on himself of the indebtedness of Onesimus, whereas in the cases supposed by theologians, the ground of imputation is found in some extraneous arrangement or constitution existing independent of the spontaneous volition of the parties. The imputation of man's sins to the Saviour may seem an exception to this, inasmuch as He undertook that burden voluntarily; but it is only in appearance that this is an exception, for our Lord's voluntariness, in this respect, is never represented in Scripture as *spontaneous*, but always as a cheerful and rejoicing submission to the will, the scheme, the constituted plan of the Father.

(3.) We have now to inquire how far this theological doctrine of imputation is sanctioned in its doctrine by Scripture. We have seen that in form it has little or no sanction; but this does not prove that it is not really taught there, for a theological dogma may be substantially in Scripture, though the terms used to express it may not be found there at all, or found expressing something different. We have to ask now, then, not whether the *word* imputation, as used by theologians, is legitimately used by them, but whether the *thing* that word



is used to express is in accordance with Scripture. And here I shall confine myself to the one point of the imputation to mankind of Adam's sin, as that is the subject for the sake of which I have entered on this disquisition.

Theologians say that the first sin of the first man has been imputed to all his posterity: What do they intend this phraseology to convey? The answer to this question brings before us the existence of a diversity of doctrine among theologians on this head.

By all who hold the doctrine of imputation in any sense, it is maintained that men universally are involved in the consequences of Adam's sin; but there is difference of opinion, both as to the nature of these consequences, and as to the ground on which the imputation of them to the race rests. As respects the consequences, some hold that it is merely the temporal consequences of Adam's sin that have descended to his posterity; while others maintain that men are involved also and primarily in the spiritual consequences; and within the latter class opinions range from the holding that all men actually sinned in Adam, in the sense of being guilty of his sin and personally liable to all the penal consequences thereof, to the holding that only certain privative results have ensued to the race from Adam's guilt, such as the want of positive righteousness, and of the advantages Adam enjoyed in Paradise for pursuing a holy and happy course. There are differences of opinion also as to whether the consequences to mankind of Adam's sin are purely legal or purely moral, or a union of both; some contending that it is merely certain chartered blessings that we have lost, certain legal disadvantages under which we have been brought by the sin of Adam; others, that it is a moral vitiosity of nature that has been thereby entailed on us; and others, that through the sin of Adam all men have become both legally proscribed and morally corrupt. Then, as to the *ground* of imputation, some find that in a federal constitution established by God, in which Adam represented and acted for the race, so that all his posterity are involved in the consequences of his act on the juridical principle "*quod aliquis facit per alium facit per se*;" whilst others resolve the ground of imputation into the natural connection of Adam as the progenitor of mankind with his

posterity, to whom he has transmitted character and condition by a natural and unavoidable process.

In the above digest I have taken no notice of the doctrine of those who teach that God's imputation to mankind of Adam's sin is simply His determination to deal with all men who sin as He dealt with the author of the first sin ; for this, though dignified by theologians with the title of *Imputatio metaphysica*, is in reality no imputation at all, but a mere evasion of the whole subject under a specious name.

a. Disregarding minor and unessential differences, the theory of imputation as applied to the existence of sin in our race, emerges in two principal forms—that of *Imputatio ad reatum*, and that of *Imputatio ad poenam*.

(a.) *Imputatio ad reatum*. By this is intended that men, the descendants of Adam, are regarded by God as lying under guilt and blame because of Adam's sin. This opinion does not necessarily involve what we may call the identification hypothesis, according to which all men are held to have been so identified with Adam that they sinned his sin, are guilty of his guilt, and fell in his fall. It may be doubted, indeed, whether any man ever really held this opinion as literally construed, for it seems impossible to attach to it any intelligible meaning. At the same time some very able writers have expressed themselves as if they not only held this view, but deemed the holding of it essential to a just apprehension of the whole scheme of evangelical truth. Augustine, for instance, fluctuates between this and the opinion that Adam's sin reaches us not by imputation, but by the communication of an "occult infection (or poison) of carnal concupiscence," which leads all to sin ; or rather, perhaps, I should say, Augustine held both opinions, regarding Adam's sin as having not only vitiated our nature, but also entailed on us guilt. It is his doctrine on the latter of these alone that we are now concerned with, and here such statements as the following meet us in his writings: "Because he [Adam] in the exercise of his free will deserted God, he experienced the just judgment of God to be condemned with his whole race, which as yet lying wholly in him sinned with him."<sup>1</sup> What follows enunciates this view still more explicitly: "In whom

<sup>1</sup> *De Correptione et Gratia*, c. 10.

[Adam] all have sinned, since all were that one man (*omnes ille unus homo fuerunt*)."<sup>1</sup> The following is Stapfer's statement of what he regarded as the orthodox doctrine on this head: "The root having sinned, all that descends from it and with it constitutes one whole may also be judged to have sinned, since it is not different from the root, but one with it."<sup>2</sup> But by no one, perhaps, has this view been more strongly stated than by Mr. Haldane: "The sin of Adam," says he, "was ours, as really and truly so as it was the sin of Adam himself; so that every believer is bound to acknowledge and confess that he is guilty of Adam's sin."<sup>3</sup>

Under such extreme views the idea of imputation in its proper theologic sense disappears. It is no longer Adam's sin that is imputed to us but our own sin, in some mysterious way committed not by us but by our first parent, which is held against us. Of such a doctrine taken thus literally, it may suffice at present to say that such an identification of the race with the first man is in the nature of things impossible, that to affirm that Adam's sin was ours in the same sense as it was his is simply absurd, and that to confess ourselves guilty of a sin which we know we did not commit, is alike contrary to reason and conscience, to truth and good morals.

Among the more reasonable upholders of the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity this language is used to convey the idea that God, on account of Adam's sin, holds all men *as if* they had themselves committed that sin, *i.e.* holds them guilty and deserving of punishment. Along with this it is also generally held that men, through this connection with Adam, are universally partakers of a vitiated moral nature. This opinion is expressed thus in the Confession of the Westminster Assembly: "Our first parents being the root of all mankind, the guilt of their sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation." This may be regarded as the prevailing opinion of modern Calvinists.

This is what has been called *Immediate* Imputation. There is, however, a *mediate* imputation held by many excellent

<sup>1</sup> *De Peccat. Mer. et Remiss.*, i. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Polem.*, i. p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> *Comment. on Romans*, vol. i. p. 440.

writers, according to which man, inheriting from Adam a fallen and corrupt nature, commences his moral existence by appropriating to himself, as it were, Adam's sin, in other words, actually sinning in the same way as he sinned, by rebellion against God, and that all men thus incur the same guilt as he, and the same penalty as was pronounced on him. This opinion is advocated by Venema in his valuable *Institutes of Theology* (pp. 519-526). Dwight also favours it (*Theology*, Sermon 32). Dr. Wardlaw, who advocates the doctrine of immediate imputation, also advocates this as not incompatible with the other (*Systematic Theology*, ii. p. 267). The only remark which I would offer at present on this doctrine is, that whether it expresses a truth or not, it is improperly offered as being a form of the doctrine of imputation. Mediate imputation, as above explained, is no imputation at all in the sense in which that term is used by theologians. The whole amount of guilt and blame which it supposes to attach to any individual is derived from his own sin, and his connection with Adam is adduced simply as accounting for the fact of his possessing a nature that leads him to sin. This is not in any sense the imputation to him of Adam's guilt—it is simply the accounting for his individual depravity, and ascribing that to his connection with the first man. The imputation of guilt necessarily involves the holding of the party in some sense as legally involved in the blame and punishment of the act, the guilt of which is imputed to him.

(b) *Imputatio ad penam*. According to this view, God does not impute guilt to men on account of their first parents' transgression, nor does He send men into the world with a positively vitiated nature, but He treats them penally in consequence of Adam's sin, as if they had committed it, by withholding from them all those supernatural gifts and chartered blessings which Adam enjoyed, the consequence of which is that they, through the native operation of their own lusts and passions, fall under the power of sin, and so become personally guilty before God. This is the view advocated by Dr. Payne in his able work on *Original Sin*. According to him, Adam's transgression "rendered us liable to the loss of that sovereign and efficacious influence without which life in either sense of the term has never been known to exist"

(p. 108). In another place he thus explains the phrase "chartered blessings," by which he describes the benefits which Adam lost by his sin: They are "blessings which God was not bound in equity to bestow and to continue, —blessings which had their exclusive source in Divine Sovereignty, which might, of course, be withdrawn at any time, and in any way that should seem meet to God Himself, of which the continued and permanent enjoyment might be suspended on any conditions He should see fit to appoint" (pp. 48, 49). This is substantially the view of Edwards, so far at least as imputation is concerned; though he differs from Dr. Payne in holding with Augustine, that a positive vitiosity of nature has been derived from Adam to his posterity. It is somewhat singular (and the fact has not been noticed, so far as I am aware) that the opinion advocated by Dr. Payne is almost identical with that advanced by Bellarmine as the doctrine of the Romish Church: "The penalty, which properly corresponds as its counterpart to the first sin, was the loss of original righteousness, and of the supernatural gifts with which God had endowed our nature. . . . Corruption of nature flowed not from the want of any gift, nor from the accession of any evil quality, but solely from the loss of supernatural gifts, on account of the sin of Adam." The "supernatural gifts" of the Romish divine answer to the "chartered blessings" of Dr. Payne. Among the schoolmen, the views of Anselm and the Scotists approximated to that expressed by Bellarmine, whilst Aquinas sustained the doctrine of Augustine.

b. In proceeding to test these views by the teaching of Scripture, there are two remarks of a preliminary nature which I would offer. The first is, that as by the supposition it was through Adam's sin that evil came upon his posterity, the nature and degree of that evil as affecting them cannot essentially differ from the evil he brought on himself by his sin; it must be evil of the same kind as came on him, and not greater in degree than that. This seems to flow necessarily out of the very idea of it, as evil resulting from his fall. The second remark I would make is, that as what was purely personal to Adam could not in any judicial way descend to his posterity, we must look to something public

and legal in his relation to them as the source of the transmission from him to them of legal disabilities.

These remarks seem to indicate the course of inquiry which it behoves us to pursue in order to obtain satisfaction on the point now before us. We have, first, to ascertain what penalty Adam brought on himself by his sin; we have then to consider in what capacity he acted when this penalty was incurred by him; and we have, in fine, to determine how and to what extent his posterity suffer in consequence of their relation to him. To facilitate our investigation, I shall propose a series of questions to which I shall endeavour to find the just Biblical answer.

(a.) What was Adam's position in Paradise as respects its bearing on the question now before us? Now, in answer to this, I think the one point that we are concerned with is his being subjected to a positive test of obedience, on his meeting and satisfying which depended his continuance in that state in which he had been created. Much is often said in inquiries such as that in which we are engaged about the supernatural gifts and endowments with which Adam was invested in Paradise; and of late it has become customary in certain quarters to speak of these as chartered blessings. That Adam enjoyed in Paradise certain privileges and blessings of a peculiar kind cannot be denied; he had immunity from suffering, from the sight of moral evil, from the corrupting influence of evil example, and such like, and he enjoyed the favour of God and free intercourse with Him; and if it is these that are intended when chartered blessings are spoken of, there need be no dispute about the matter, though a phrase less liable to be misunderstood might with advantage have been used. But it is evident that the phrase is meant to convey the existence of privileges beyond these—privileges not arising out of man's condition and his natural relation to his Creator, but privileges conveyed by God's sovereign bounty to man, and of a supernatural kind. Now, in reference to this I feel constrained to ask, On what statement of Scripture is the assertion founded that Adam possessed any supernatural gifts or chartered blessings in Paradise? I confess I can find none. It is true that Adam was made in the image and likeness of God, and I freely

admit that that expression includes moral as well as intellectual resemblance to God—purity as well as intelligence; nor can we suppose, even apart from this, that from the good and holy aught but a good and holy being could immediately proceed. But moral strength is a matter of degree, and we cannot, I think, suppose that it was possessed in any very high degree by our first parents. If we apply to them the best test of moral strength with which we are acquainted, viz. the power to resist temptation, we must pronounce their moral strength very small—not much beyond that of a child; for the temptation under which they fell was about the smallest to which an intelligent agent could be exposed. I cannot, therefore, regard them as having very extraordinary or supernatural gifts. Had they possessed the moral strength of even any of us, they surely would have stood a longer siege, and some severer assaults would have been necessary before they capitulated to the foe. They were good and holy simply because they had been made so, and knew nothing else; but they could not have possessed this quality in any high—not to say supernatural—degree, or they would have successfully resisted the slight trial to which they were exposed.

I may here glance, in passing, at Dr. Payne's statement as to the special or chief of those blessings to which he has applied the term "chartered." He signalizes as one the presence in Adam of the Divine Spirit, and the influence of that Divine Agent on Adam's mind, whereby he was raised to a high degree of holiness and purity. Now, it seems to me strange that it did not occur to so acute a thinker to ask, If this boon was possessed by Adam, how came Adam to fall? According to Dr. Payne's theory, it was the loss of this which constituted the principal effect of Adam's fall, and the consequent absence of this which is the cause of sin to Adam's posterity. We sin, he tells us, because we *want*, through Adam's fault, this union of the soul with God, without which man cannot live so as to please God. But if the want of this causes us to sin, the presence of this would keep us from sin; for nothing can be more evident than that if the want of anything causes a particular result, the removal of that want would prevent that result. But Adam

had this blessing, according to Dr. Payne, for this constituted, in his view, the supreme boon of Paradise. How, then, came Adam to sin at all? If he possessed that, the want of which is the sole cause of sin, how came he to be a sinner? The conclusion is, I think, inevitable that Adam did not possess this so-called chartered blessing. To this conclusion the circumstance already noticed, viz. the ease with which our first parents were seduced into sin, adds strength. A soul in union with the Divine Spirit, and naturally holy, could not have yielded at so slight an attack of the tempter. Who of us would not stand in doubt of any man's having the Spirit of God in union with his soul, if he sank as readily under temptation as Adam did? And if we judge thus of men encompassed with infirmity and accustomed to sin, how much more must we judge so of one who thus fell when ignorant of sin, and surrounded by all the hallowed influences of a sinless world?

I am forced to conclude, then, that the common notion that Adam enjoyed in Paradise a supernatural degree of holiness and moral power, is a notion without solid foundation. I would further remark, however, that supposing this notion better founded than it is, it seems incompetent to bring such endowments into consideration in the question now before us. For whatever were the moral and spiritual excellences conferred on Adam, these were purely personal, and could have no bearing on his position as under trial, excepting as they may have increased his individual personal responsibility. The special feature of Adam's position, which it behoves us to keep in view, is his being placed under a positive prohibitory enactment, on his obedience to which his continuance in happiness depended. He was, of course, bound to keep every part of God's law, and *any* transgression of that law would have been followed by consequences of a penal kind to himself. So far as the history goes, however, it was only to the transgression of this law that the threatened penalty was attached, and we have no right to conclude that the *same* consequences which flowed from this would have flowed from any other breach of the divine law. It seems important to a just view of this whole subject that this should be kept distinctly in view, that it was not merely



because Adam sinned, but because he sinned in this particular case, by breaking this one prohibition, the appointed test of his obedience, that he fell and brought on his race so many evils.

(b.) Let us now ask, What was the consequence to Adam of his transgression? The history makes it very plain that a great, an immediate, and most calamitous change passed upon Adam after he had sinned. Without travelling beyond the record, or indulging in any speculative inferences, we may unhesitatingly assert that the following evils were incurred by Adam in consequence of his sin:—First, he fell under the divine displeasure, and incurred the penalty which had been denounced against disobedience, viz. *death*. Secondly, he came under the influence of distrust of God and want of reverence and love for God; as is evident from his hiding himself from God's presence, and from his sullen and almost insolent answers to God's questioning of him. Thirdly, he became subject to the power of the tempter—the serpent, the prince of darkness, who, having once acquired a victory over him, would ever after seek to use him as his thrall. This is evident from the nature of the promise of deliverance, which was in reality a promise that the serpent's persistent and persevering tyranny over man should ultimately be destroyed; the bruising of the serpent's head being not the destruction of Satan's person, but the destruction of his power over man.

Now of these evils that came on Adam, the only one that came on him directly, immediately, and exclusively, in consequence of his eating the forbidden fruit, was the first—viz. the penalty of death. This was the predicted and denounced penalty of transgression: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." His incurring death, therefore, was the direct and the only direct legal consequence of his sin. Other evils came upon him incidentally, and were the natural rather than the statutory effects of his transgression. They were therefore personal evils, not public disabilities, and cannot come into question as forming any part of what he entailed on his posterity.

But what are we to understand by the "death" which came upon Adam by his sin? In reply to this some have contended that it was only temporal death—the death of the

body ; whilst others with equal eagerness have contended that it was death in the most comprehensive sense—death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. I cannot help thinking that a great deal of ingenuity, and not a little temper, has been unprofitably expended on this discussion. If, instead of diverging into general speculation and debate, we keep close by the Mosaic narrative, I feel assured that we shall reach satisfaction by a shorter and surer process. From this narrative I gather, in the outset, and as a certain fact, that the penalty of death denounced against sin was one which our first parents immediately incurred. The words of the threatening are most precise : “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” According to the law, then, immediate death was the penalty to be inflicted on Adam if he ate the forbidden fruit. The law does not say, “In that day thou shalt *become* mortal, and so at some future period die ;” nor does it say, “Thou shalt then enter upon a state of progressive degradation, which shall ultimately culminate in eternal death ;” it says simply, “In that day thou shalt die.” We must believe, therefore, that Adam, having committed the forbidden deed, incurred the penalty actually threatened, and in that day did die—unless we would impute to God a trifling with His own edict which is incompatible with justice, or a carelessness of expression in the framing of His edict which is incompatible with the idea of a perfect law.

I am well aware of the attempts which have been made to show that the words “In the day thou eatest thereof” do not mean “in that very day,” but may receive an interpretation compatible with the supposition that a long interval might elapse between the commission of the sin and the suffering of the penalty ; but these attempts are for the most part of such a kind that it is impossible for any one who has been at all accustomed to a just method of interpreting Scriptures to treat them with respect. The only attempt to place this on an exegetical basis is that of those who affirm that had it been intended that Adam was to die on the very day that he broke the command, the words used would have been, not simply ביום, but ביום הזה or ביום ההוא. This argument is advanced by Mr. Holden and adopted by Dr. Payne. It is founded, however, on a gross mistake—a double mistake ;

for, in the first place, it is not true that in order to express the idea of an event happening on that very day in which something else happened or might happen, the Hebrews never used the simple **ביום**; instances to the contrary are Lev. vii. 35; Isa. xi. 16; Lam. iii. 57; and, in the second place, it has been overlooked that in Gen. ii. 17, where we have the words of threatening, **ביום** is in construction with the verb **אכל**, the expression being **בַּיּוֹם אֲכָלְךָ**, which is definite, and does not admit of the insertion of either **היום** or **ההוא**. Besides, this argument is virtually given up by Dr. Payne in the very context in which he adduces it, for he goes on to say that the words of the threatening mean "instant and necessary exposure to the infliction of death." According to this the words "in the day" are equivalent to "in the instant," so that all the criticism expended on them to show that they cannot mean this is virtually rendered superfluous. What would have been more to the point would be to have shown that the words "thou shalt surely die" mean not "instant and certain death," as they seem to do, but "instant and necessary exposure to the infliction of death," as Dr. Payne says they mean. This neither he nor any one, so far as I am aware, has attempted.

Taking the narrative then as it stands, I feel constrained to believe that as God threatened Adam with instant and certain death in case of transgression, Adam did instantly die when he transgressed. And this may enable us to say with some degree of confidence what it was that under this penalty Adam incurred. The word "death" is used in Scripture in a variety of meanings; but instead of diverging into general speculation or inquiry on this head, if we are sure that the death Adam incurred was something that actually befell him, we have only to ask what *did* befall him to get an answer to our question. Now, on this point the history leaves us in no great uncertainty. Adam lost by his transgression (immediately and directly) all the privileges of Paradise, including immediate intercourse with God and the enjoyment of His favour and image; he was sent into a world covered with briars and thorns, and he was doomed to a life of pains and sorrows to be terminated by death. This was for one whose true life consisted in being like God and enjoying His favour

really to die. Here a real penalty was incurred, a real evil endured. The mere cessation of animal life is not necessarily an evil, any more than mere existence is necessarily a good. All depends on the state morally and physically in which the being exists; and as for man the only real good is to be at one with God, to have fellowship with Him, and to enjoy His favour and the happiness which that brings, to be deprived of these is for man to endure the sorest privation, is to be deprived of his true life, is, in the saddest sense, to die. Death in Scripture is used emphatically to designate a state the opposite of felicity, dignity, and purity, of which state the dissolution of the union of soul and body, and the return of the latter to the ruin and gloom of the grave, is the visible type. In the Epistle to the Romans the apostle puts the death which came as the consequence of Adam's sin in contrast with the grace or favour of God (v. 15), and with the gift of righteousness or acceptance with God (v. 17), and he represents it as the opposite of eternal life (vi. 23) obtained through Jesus Christ our Lord. In such a connection it would be absurd to restrict the term to mere natural decease. That is not death as opposed to righteousness, to the enjoyment of God's favour, and to eternal life through Christ. The death of which the apostle writes is that state of moral and physical dishonour, suffering, and decay which is the opposite of that state of holiness, dignity, and blessedness which Adam enjoyed whilst he lived in God's favour and obeyed His will. Into this state of death Adam entered when he sinned; on the very day on which he ate the forbidden fruit he died; he lost the divine favour; he became subject to evil, physical and moral; and he received into his frame the seeds of mortality, decay, and dissolution. This is the penalty of guilt; and this penalty Adam incurred by his transgression.

(c.) In what relation to his posterity did Adam stand whilst sustaining this probation and enduring this penalty? The reply to this is, That of federal head and representative, who appeared and acted not for himself alone, but for his posterity. It is true he was also their natural progenitor, and as such naturally transmitted to them certain qualities and conditions of a natural kind. Beyond such *natural* effects, however, his

relation to them as progenitor could not extend. Effects reaching them in consequence of his conduct as under a positive constitution, under a dispensation, could reach them only if in this condition he acted as their representative or covenant or dispensational head.

We may illustrate this by supposing the case of two men standing at the head of a family; both of whom have certain marked natural peculiarities, but one of whom has advantages which are personal though capable of being transferred, such, for instance, as wealth; while the other has advantages which he owes solely to his living under a certain constitution, such, for instance, as rank, titles, aristocratic privileges, which come to him solely in virtue of his being the subject of some specific arrangement or political system under which he lives. On comparing these two cases you will see at a glance that whilst both may and probably will transmit to their children their natural peculiarities, the former is at liberty to transmit any or all of his personal advantages as he pleases, or to alienate them from his children altogether; whilst the latter can transmit his advantages only if his position has been a representative one, only if he has held them in trust for his race, and in this case he cannot hinder them from descending to his family. A wealthy merchant may or may not make his children the heirs of his wealth; a titled nobleman cannot but transmit his dignities and privileges to his descendants, or if he should have forfeited these by misconduct he cannot but transmit to his posterity, however personally innocent, the degradation and forfeiture of privilege he has incurred. This difference arises solely from the one set of advantages being personal, whilst the other set is constitutional, and the party receiving or sustaining them bears a representative or federal character.

Applying this to the matter before us, it is easy to see that Adam could entail on his posterity his dispensational advantages or penalties (as the case came to be through his sin) only on the supposition that he sustained, whilst enjoying these advantages or receiving these penalties, a *representative* character. It comes, therefore, to be necessary to inquire whether there be any sufficient reason for believing that Adam bore such a character; and this can be

answered only by an examination of the statements of Scripture bearing on the subject.

There is one consideration, however, of a general kind which, before proceeding to examine passages, it is worth while to ponder. It cannot be denied that as the children of Adam we suffer disadvantages on account of his sin. However low we reduce the estimate of the evil which has come on us through his conduct, it cannot be denied that evil of some sort has come on us thereby. Even if we allow no more than, with Pelagius and Socinus, that the native mortality of man has thereby been suffered to come into operation, still, as this is an evil from which Adam was exempt in Paradise, it is thereby admitted that we are sufferers through his act. But if we suffer, whether it be in the way of privation or in the way of infliction in consequence of Adam's sin, this can be reconciled with equitable administration only on the supposition that Adam appeared and acted as our representative. If he did so, then, as all jurists allow, our suffering through his sin is perfectly equitable; it is a thing which, under a legal constitution, could not be avoided; the principle *quod facit per alium facit per se* covers it and justifies it. But it is otherwise if he was not our representative. We are, in that case, in no way involved in his doings, and have a right to be exempt from the penal consequences of them. It will not do to say, These come upon us naturally, as the diseased constitution of the drunkard descends to his child. The two cases are not parallel. The disease of the drunkard descends to his child because it *is* disease, not because his drunkenness is a sin. Had the position been that Adam's sin produced in him a diseased state of body which was found also in his descendants, it might be contended on physiological grounds that in their sufferings there was nothing beyond a natural effect. But this is not the position. The position is that Adam's sin, as sin, entailed on his posterity a penalty under which they suffer, and this we maintain is reconcilable with equity of administration only on the supposition that he appeared and acted in a representative capacity. This at the outset renders it extremely probable that Adam sustained in Paradise a representative character, and that the penalty

he in that character incurred has necessarily descended to all his posterity.

Of the passages of Scripture which support and establish this conclusion, the most weighty are found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The concluding half of the fifth chapter of that Epistle bears especially on this subject. There we find the apostle first expressly stating, not only that by one man sin entered the world and so death by sin, but that this has taken place because in that one man's sin all have sinned. It is not necessary in order to substantiate this reasoning that we should resort to the exegesis of Augustine and others who render the concluding clause of ver. 12, "in whom [*i.e.* the one man, Adam] all have sinned;" at best this is of doubtful legitimacy, both linguistically and as a matter of construction; and it is unnecessary for the purpose of bringing out the meaning of the apostle's words as above given. Adhering to the rendering in the A. V. as that best supported, viz. "for that [*or because*] all have sinned," we ask, To what does this refer? to the actual sins of the individuals of our race, or to their sin in Adam? That it cannot refer to the former we are constrained to conclude, from the fact that the apostle makes the incidence of the sin here spoken of coextensive with the incidence of death. "Death," saith he, "hath passed upon all, because all have sinned;" the latter fact is the cause of the former. Wherever the effect, then, is found there must be the operation of the cause; wherever there is death there must be this sin of which Paul speaks. But we find death where there is no actual sin, as in the case of infants; from all which it clearly follows that it cannot be of actual sin that Paul here speaks. But if not of actual sin, then it must be of representative sin—of sin committed virtually in Adam by his posterity—that he speaks. And with this tallies his whole statement in this verse. How jejune and empty his words if we understand this last clause of actual sin committed personally by men! "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all men, because all have committed sin." One does not see the force of the "so" here; nor, indeed, the need of the latter part of the verse at all; for if death and sin are inseparable, of course, if all commit sin all must die. It is to be noted,

moreover, that the sentence in ver. 12 is incomplete; we have a comparison where nothing is expressly compared. "*As* by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed on all men, because all have sinned,"—here the sentence stops, and the question naturally arises, *As what?* The apostle does not say, but leaves us, I apprehend, to supply the apodosis of his sentence from what goes before. Some, indeed, propose to find the close of the sentence and the completion of the comparison in ver. 18: "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." But not only is this a violent expedient, it is withal an unsatisfactory one; for still the sentence in ver. 12 remains unfinished, and cannot possibly be completed grammatically from ver. 18, which is no more than complete in itself, and has nothing to spare for the completion of any other sentence. The "therefore" with which ver. 18 commences plainly connects it, not with ver. 12, but with the verses immediately preceding, the 13th to 17th; and, indeed, the whole train of the apostle's reasoning is dislocated and disturbed, unless we regard the 18th verse as joining part of the same context as the preceding from ver. 13. It appears to me that we have here an instance of what occurs elsewhere in the N. T. (comp. Gal. iii. 6; Matt. xxv. 14), where we have a sentence left incomplete because it is presumed that the reader will naturally complete it from what goes before. Now, in the preceding context Paul has been speaking of Christ's relation to His people, who are justified by His blood. Well, he goes on to say, The relation in which Christ thus stands to His people is analogous to that in which Adam stood to his posterity; the relation in which the sin-destroyer stands to those who through Him became righteous is analogous to that in which the sin-bringer stood to those who through him have become sinners. I would therefore complete ver. 12 thus: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed on all men, because all have sinned: even so, in like manner, has righteousness come by one man, and therewith life to all who are in Him." When the passage is read thus, the difficulties which have been thought to impede



the exegesis of this entire context will be found to be very much cleared away. But if this be the correct way of taking up the apostle's sentence, it follows that it can only be of a representative and constitutional, not of a natural connection with Adam on the part of the race that Paul here speaks. It is only thus that the analogy between the connection of believers with Christ and of the race with Adam is preserved. Believers live through Christ, not in virtue of a natural connection with Him, but in virtue of a constitution under which He appeared and acted for them. It follows that if men sin and die in Adam in a manner analogous to that in which believers are justified and live in Christ, then Adam must have sustained towards them a federal, representative, or constitutional relation, in virtue of which, and not in virtue of any natural relationship, they have become sinners.

In ver. 13 and following verses Paul goes on to a still further statement of this same doctrine. He appeals to the undeniable fact of the death of infants as proving that all men are involved in the consequences of Adam's sin. Infants do not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression, and yet the apostle argues by implication sin they must in some way, since they suffer that which was in part at least the penalty of transgression. His argument here turns on the assumed premiss that penal evil will not be inflicted under the just government of God except where the legal liability to that is contracted; and from this he argues that as penal evil has unquestionably been endured by men in cases where there was no personal breach of law, and therefore no incurring of legal liability to suffer by any deed of the person's own, it can only be through the deed of another acting for them that such liability can come upon them. Under a just government there are only two ways in which the subjects can become legally liable to penal effects; the one is their own misconduct, the other is through the misconduct of another who represents them and acts for them. A man, for instance, may suffer the penalty of a debtor either through his own extravagance or negligence, or, whilst he is still a child, through the extravagance or negligence of the trustees and guardians of his property; or a family may lose all its honours for generation after generation through the misconduct of its chief for the

time being. In the same way, under the government of God penal liability may come through a representative as well as through a person's own act; and the argument of the apostle from the case of infants is, that as death came to them through Adam without their being themselves transgressors, they must have sinned in him, *i.e.* he must have acted as their representative when he sinned. They present the case of persons to whom attaches sin without transgression—it is important to observe how the apostle discriminates *ἀμαρτία* from *παράβασις* here—*i.e.* they are under a legal liability to a penalty which they have not incurred by any act of their own. It follows that they have incurred it through the act of him who brought that penalty on the race, and who must have appeared and acted as the representative of the race.

The case which the apostle thus adduces may be justly regarded as a decisive one. It is what Lord Bacon would have called an "*instantia crucis*"—a sign-post instance standing, like a cross, at the division of the roads and pointing the traveller decisively which to choose. If penal evil comes on and has at all times from Adam downward come on the merest infants; if they, in fact, are never born otherwise than as subject to penal evil; if from the first moment of their existence they are plunged into an atmosphere of penalty: the conclusion is irresistible that Adam has by his transgression brought sin, *i.e.* legal liability, upon all mankind; that by him have sin and death—legal liability and legal woe—entered our world, and so, in this and in no other way, hath death passed upon all, because in this way all have become guilty or legally liable to penalty. If we resist this conclusion, we are like persons who with their eyes open take a different direction from that which the finger-post distinctly declares to be the right one.

Adam's representative character in relation to his posterity receives still further illustration from the apostle, who goes on to say that in this relation he was "the type (*τύπος*) of Him who is to come." By type here the apostle means, not mere resemblance, but a resemblance of such a kind that it was fitted and designed to suggest to the mind of the beholder that which it resembled. It is in this sense that the apostle says the O. T. ceremonies were "types

of good things to come ;" there was a certain fitness in them to prefigure and so to suggest to the mind a just idea of future blessings, the blessings of the new economy. In like manner, he says here that Adam prefigured Christ ; he bore to Him such a resemblance that he was fitted to convey an idea or representation of Him. To the same effect is what the apostle says (1 Cor. xv. 45) when he calls Adam and Christ the first and second man ; they were so only in virtue of some resemblance between them which made them stand out from all other partakers of human nature ; as compared with each other they were parallels ; as compared with mankind generally their position was peculiar and special. Now in what lay the resemblance of the two ? Not in person ; not in circumstances ; not in temporal condition ; not in spiritual character ; but in the one point of which the apostle is discoursing in the passage we are considering from the Epistle to the Romans, — their relation, namely, to those federally connected with them respectively, and the effects which their acting when under probation had upon those thus connected with them. In these respects the resemblance between the two is great and marked : the type prefiguring the antitype, just as the stamp on the wax betokens and figures the seal. In consequence of Adam's acting, sin came upon him, and through him upon all men ; in consequence of Christ's acting, righteousness and life came upon Him and all that are His. Adam's transgression entailed penal evil upon men ; Christ's obedience cuts off the entail of evil and restores to forfeited good. In the one case we come under evil without any transgression of our own ; in the other case we come into the possession of good without any righteousness of our own. The transaction is in both cases a purely forensic or legal one ; but it belongs to the loftier department of law — that in which relations of loyalty and citizenship and privilege are concerned, not that in which the relations of mere equity as between subjects of the kingdom are concerned.

I must content myself with these illustrations of the position that Adam sustained in Paradise a representative character. He was not only the natural head or root of his posterity ; he was also under a constitution or economy where he enjoyed

certain privileges and immunities, and as sustaining which he acted, not for himself alone, but for them. Hence the apostle represents mankind, not as becoming sinners through Adam by means of any natural process like that of imitation, nor as growing to be sinners in consequence of any inherent tendency, such as a vicious germ, an instilled moral poison, or a communicated principle of evil would produce; but as *constituted* (*κατεστάθησαν*, Rom. v. 19) sinners. The use of such a term by the apostle ought to decide this question. It is a word which admits of but one explanation. Its primary meaning is that of placing a thing or person in any position or office; and it is generally used in the N. T. in the sense of "appointing," "setting," or "constituting," when used of persons, as when our Lord said, *τίς με κατέστησε δικάστην ἐφ' ὑμᾶς*; "who set or constituted me a judge over you?" (Luke xii. 14), and when the apostle enjoins on Titus to "appoint elders in every city" (Tit. i. 5). In forensic references it is used exactly as in Scotland the term "sist" is used when a prisoner is said to be "sisted" at the bar. Throughout, the idea of extraneous constitution, as distinct from internal, subjective tendency, growth, or becoming, is preserved; so that when the apostle says that through Adam all men have been constituted sinners, he virtually denies that our sinfulness is derived by the transmission of a moral virus from the first man, and fixes our attention on an outward legal arrangement, ordinance, economy, or constitution, as that in virtue of which the sin of Adam affected us. Through his sin the many, the race, descended from him are, in respect of their legal standing, held to be sinners,—just as the descendants of an attainted peer are in consequence of his treason held constitutionally to be traitors.

(d.) We have already virtually answered the fourth question which may be proposed in regard to the subject of investigation now before us, viz., To what extent, and in what way, did Adam's posterity share in his doom? The answer to this is that he brought on them the penalty he had himself incurred as the result of his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit,—that penalty neither more nor less. This follows as a corollary from the conclusion at which we have arrived, that Adam appeared and acted in

Paradise under a constitution as the federal head and representative of his posterity. Under such an arrangement Adam could not avoid transmitting to his posterity the legal disadvantages and disabilities under which he had fallen, but he could transmit nothing beyond this so as to *impose* it on his posterity. His sons might follow his example, and so be led into personal transgression, but this would be an act of free choice on their part, for which they were personally responsible; or they might derive from him certain personal qualities which might affect their own subsequent conduct, but this result would be purely natural, and not such as would connect any of his remoter posterity with him in respect of legal condition or moral character. What alone he could judicially send down upon them was the legal penalty,—the forfeiture of privilege and the endurance of penal disadvantages which he had brought on himself by his sin. To revert to the illustration already employed, Adam's position, in relation to his descendants, resembled that of the chief of a noble house in reference to those who are to succeed him. By his persistence in loyalty his heir succeeds to all the dignities and privileges he has enjoyed under his patent of nobility; but if he plays the rebel and is attainted, then the attainder he has brought on himself descends on his heir. His personal qualities, good or bad, and his personal possessions, may or may not be transmitted; that depends on circumstances with which his patent of nobility has nothing to do. In like manner was it with Adam and his posterity. He enjoyed Paradise and its privileges, not by natural right, but under a patent of privilege; and when he forfeited this, it was virtually cancelled, and could come into operation again in the case of any of his posterity only by a new act of the sovereign, by a new patent being made out in his favour. Less than this could not result from his act, and more than this could not have been legally inflicted. What came, then, on the race of mankind in consequence of Adam's sin was simply that death which came upon himself—death in the sense formerly explained.

From these considerations we are led to the conclusion that the doctrine of an *imputatio ad pœnam* of Adam's sin to his posterity is that which most satisfactorily meets the

requirements of the case. The sin of Adam has been imputed to the race descended from him, in the sense that because of this sin they are universally subjected to penal disabilities. We do not affirm any mysterious identity between Adam and his posterity whereby they were in some inexplicable way included in him and participated in his sin; nor do we assert that any moral blame attaches to any individual of the race because of our first parents' transgression; nor do we hold that any of the merely *personal* consequences to Adam of his sin have been transmitted to his descendants. We simply maintain that he, acting as their head and representative, forfeited for himself and them the covenant privileges of Paradise,—the “chartered blessings” of man's primordial state. In consequence of this they are outcasts from God's favour, and have no title to heavenly blessings. They can claim nothing but earth, the fruits of which they have to gather by toil and sorrow. They are exposed to all the natural sources of evil by which humanity may be afflicted. They carry in them the seeds of mortality, and are subject to temptation. They have no inherent principle of holiness, and they have no claim on God for supernatural help. They are the descendants of a fallen, dishonoured, and attainted progenitor; and if there is any mitigation of the calamity of their condition, or any prospect of their being restored to their primeval dignity, it can only be through an act of pure grace on the part of the sovereign,—an act alleviating or reversing the attainder their ancestor brought upon them.

Adopting this view of the subject, we avoid the doctrine of the propagation of a vitiated nature from Adam to his posterity. That doctrine is one which it is impossible by any ingenuity to reconcile with just views of man's personal freedom and moral responsibility. If a child is born with a nature morally vitiated, then that child can no more help acting amiss than a man whose eyesight is vitiated can help seeing amiss; and the one is no more the object righteously of blame than the other. Nor is there any need to resort to such a doctrine for the explanation of the fact it is generally adduced to explain, viz., the universal sinfulness of the race; for if it be held that every child enters our

world destitute of any outward safeguard from evil, and of any positive bias towards good, he is in circumstances which render it morally certain that without any positive bias to evil, such as a vitiated nature would produce, he will, in the exercise of his free choice, become, what all men are, a sinner. The centre of his being is *self*; he knows nothing better or to be preferred; he is *ἄθεος*, without God, from whose favour the race has fallen; he has no desire supernaturally implanted in him to please God; and hence no sooner does God's law come athwart his inclinations than he rises in actual rebellion against it and Him. Thus personal guilt is contracted, and thus the habit of sinning is gradually formed. In this way the fact is accounted for without doing violence to man's moral nature.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### SIN.

#### VII. CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

The investigations in which we have been engaged are of importance chiefly as tending to secure just views of God's method of dealing with His rational creatures here below, and as accounting for the fact, so notorious to all observers, that all men without exception are sinners. So strange and perplexing has this fact appeared to many, that they have been driven to the most violent hypotheses in order, as they believe, to account for it. Thus men of the highest intelligence, from Augustine downwards, have not shrunk from maintaining that men derive in regular succession from Adam a vitiated nature, a nature not only destitute of positive goodness, but into which a moral *virus* is judicially infused as a penal consequence of Adam's transgression. "We," says Augustine, "were all in him who did this [*i.e.* sinned], and so great was the actual fault that by it universal human nature became vitiated, as is sufficiently indicated by the

misery of the human race: the offence was another's, but by obnoxious succession it is ours."<sup>1</sup> And again, "As by carnal propagation we were in him [Adam] before we were born, as in a parent, as in a root, so the whole tree is poisoned in which we were."<sup>2</sup> And again, "Nature and the corruption of nature are propagated together."<sup>3</sup> So also Calvin says: "Original sin seems to be a hereditary pravity and corruption of our nature diffused over all parts of the soul. . . . Since in all parts of our nature we are vitiated and perverse, on account of such corruption we are deservedly condemned and held convicted before God, with whom only righteousness, innocence, and purity are accepted. Nor is that the obligation of another's fault; for when we say that we have become obnoxious to the divine judgment through the sin of Adam, it is not to be taken as if we, innocent ourselves and not deserving it, bear the blame of his fault; but because through his transgression we were brought under the curse is he said to have bound us. From him, however, not only has punishment come upon us, but a pestilence instilled from him resides in us, to which punishment is due."<sup>4</sup> As we have already seen, this opinion is one of the characteristic traits of the Calvinistic school of divines. Others again, shrinking with recoil from a doctrine which seems to involve the exemption of man from the guilt of becoming a sinner by depriving him of the power of being anything but a sinner, have resorted to the violent hypothesis of the soul's pre-existence, and have taught that in a state of being antecedent to the present each man began his career a pure and sinless being; but each fell, and then passed into this present state, each carrying with him the corrupt nature which his own fall had brought on him. This doctrine, I need not say, is utterly without any foundation in Scripture; nor is it supported by a single fact of consciousness or observation; and in itself it is inadequate, inasmuch as it is burdened with as great a difficulty as that which it aims at removing or avoiding; for if it be strange that all men should become sinners here, it is just as strange that they should all fall and become sinners in this supposed previous state of existence.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 2, *Operis Imperfecti*.

<sup>2</sup> *Sermo 14 de Verb. Apost.*, c. xv.

<sup>3</sup> *De Pecc. Orig.* 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Instit.* ii. 1. 8.



But what need is there for resorting to any such hypothesis? Is it not enough that we accept the statement of the apostle, that in Adam all die, and that through him all come under a penal condition in which, of course, they can receive no special, no gracious blessing from God (that is, in their natural state and apart from any remedial provision), but being simply left to natural influences, grow up without God, and seeking only the gratification of their own natural impulses and desires regardless of Him? That infants are in a worse state than this,—that they are under condemnation to eternal death and misery because of Adam's sin, and that they have derived from him, through their parents, a vitiated nature universally, is a position which I cannot hold. I can find no authority for it in Scripture, and in the absence of this no evidence from any other source can substantiate it, even were any such forthcoming.

But whether we have reached a satisfactory result on this point or not, does not, happily, need to affect our subsequent inquiries. Whether we can account for sin by tracing it to its source in our first parents or not, the fact that sin is in the world and attaches to the race universally, so that all men are sinners, remains; and it is this fact which chiefly concerns us. The remark of Johnson to Boswell, as reported by the latter, is quite true: "With respect to original sin," said he, "the inquiry is not necessary; for whatever is the cause of human corruption, men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt that all the laws of heaven and earth are insufficient to restrain them from crime."<sup>1</sup> Taking this as a settled point, the question of most importance which rises up before us is, What are the results or consequences in our world, and especially to the human race, of sin? To the consideration of this point let us now proceed.

#### i. *The Consequences of Sin to Man himself.*

As respects man himself the consequences of sin are these:—

(i.) The whole race is subject to suffering, disease, affliction, sorrow, and ultimately to physical death. That there

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv. p. 130.

is misery of various kinds in our world, and that no being of our race wholly escapes suffering of some kind is patent to all, and cannot have escaped the notice of the most cursory observer. Few also can fail to see that the physical evils under which men suffer stand connected with that moral evil which affects man, with that guilt of which he is conscious, and must be viewed as the penal consequences of this. It may not be possible in every case to trace the connection between the suffering and the offence, and it behoves us to be very cautious how we connect any calamity into which we ourselves or others may have fallen with any particular sin, or class of sins, we or they may have committed, so as to pronounce that the special infliction is a divine judgment because of the special offence; for we command so very limited a range of vision, and are such imperfect judges in many things pertaining to such matters, that it becomes us to beware of hasty and rash conclusions on points of this sort, especially in reference to others. Still, as a general rule, we can have no hesitation in saying that temporal evils are the consequence of sin; and we can in so many cases trace the connection between the offence and the suffering, we see the latter so following the former in course by a natural process, that the induction becomes legitimate by which we conclude this to be a principle of the divine administration here, and that as a general fact man is a sufferer because he is a sinner. What natural analogy thus leads us to consider probable, Scripture seems clearly to teach. There it is not only emphatically affirmed that death, under which term all physical evils are included, entered by sin, but it is expressly said that men as sinners shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices (Prov. i. 31). There sinners are assured that their iniquity will find them out—an assertion which has reference to the certainty with which punishment in the shape of suffering follows upon the commission of sin, even though it be hid from the knowledge, and so exempted from the judicial recognition of men. To the same effect is the statement, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked man, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (Prov. v. 22). So the prophet was commissioned to proclaim, "Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the

reward of his hands shall be given him" (Isa. iii. 11). To the same effect Zophar the Naamathite, after a lengthened enumeration of evils, concludes, "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God" (Job xx. 29).<sup>1</sup>

Of the sufferings that come upon men as the direct consequence of sin, not the least are those which arise from remorse and self-condemnation. The apostle speaks (Rom. ii. 15) of men's consciences bearing witness to the law, and their thoughts accusing them, or else excusing them. By this he intends that men sit in judgment upon themselves, and according as they see their conduct to be in accordance with the divine law, or a violation of it, they commend themselves or condemn themselves. In the latter case a feeling of remorse invades them; they bitterly censure themselves, and a painful sense of guilt, as it were, bites into their soul. God has made us thus to judge ourselves and thus to feel when we see that we have done wrong; and fallen as man is, he retains his capacity of moral judgment, is able to distinguish right from wrong, has the law written on his heart so that even in the absence of a direct revelation from heaven he can determine the course he ought to pursue, and is thus in a condition to judge himself, and to decide whether he is to be approved or condemned. This judgment he can hardly avoid making of himself, and when he finds that he stands condemned at the bar of his own judgment, he cannot but feel pained, nor can he avoid the dreadful anticipation that the condemnation he pronounces on himself is the prelude to the still severer condemnation of the Almighty Judge. Long indulgence in sin may blunt the edge of this judgment and feeling, and a habit may be acquired of stifling the convictions of conscience; but this cannot continue for ever; the internal monitor will ere long assert its right to speak, and the attempt that has been made to silence it will only make the remorse more poignant when at length conscience utters its judgment. "The conviction," says Philo Judæus, "which dwells in and is connate with every soul as an accuser, blames, accuses, upbraids, and again, as a judge, instructs, admonishes, exhorts to repentance."<sup>2</sup> So also the Rabbins called the

<sup>1</sup> See Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. I. ch. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *De Decal.*, p. 756.

conscience מַשְׁפִּיל, "the accuser." A heathen poet<sup>1</sup> could only say,—

"Hic murus aheneus esto :  
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa."

Of the agony arising from conscious guilt the Scripture presents us with a striking instance in the case of Judas, who, when he saw the result of his covetousness and treachery, and felt that he had betrayed his Master to death, brought back the price of his treason to the chief priest, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood," cast down the money in their presence, and went out and hanged himself. Many instances of a similar kind history records; and those who have had to deal with men under conviction of sin know how often the accusations of conscience so oppress men that they are crushed and overwhelmed thereby, and refuse to receive any comfort or relief. There is every reason to believe that from this the chief agony of the state of final retribution will arise.

(ii.) In consequence of sin men are brought into condemnation, and consequently under liability to punishment in a future state of being. As the present is evidently a preparatory state, and as we see in the present state that present sin is followed by consequent suffering and punishment, reason teaches us to anticipate that the sins and vices men commit or indulge in now will render the state that is to follow one to them of penal endurance and suffering. As sin is the transgression of a law, and as every law attaches to that which it prescribes the announcement of certain penalties to be incurred by those who transgress it, we are bound to expect that so it will be with the divine law. Now on this head Scripture leaves no room for doubt. The fixed, unalterable principle of the divine administration which it announces is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death" (Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23). And lest this death should be understood of some mere temporal calamity, our Lord has been careful to assure us that He, "the Son of Man, shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Epist.*, i. 1. 60.

shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xiii. 41, 42). And again in His parable of the talents, He represents the king as saying, concerning the unprofitable servant, "Cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxv. 36). In the account also which He gives of the transactions of the last judgment, He says of the wicked, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. xxv. 40). In perfect accordance with this are the statements of the apostles. Take, for instance, the detailed statement of the apostle in Rom. ii. 5-16, the more condensed but not less clear and emphatic statement in 2 Thess. i. 6-10, or the declaration in Heb. x. 30, 31. Comp. also Matt. iii. 12; Luke iii. 17; Rom. i. 18, 32; 2 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 9, iii. 7, etc.

In consequence of sin all men are thus under legal condemnation, and there lies before them the prospect of legal penalty to be endured by them. In view of this some have contended that it is altogether improper to speak of man's condition here as one of probation. Where, it has been asked, is there place for probation if men are already, because of sin, under condemnation? Now, it is undoubtedly true that if by a state of probation be meant that man is here on his trial whether he shall become guilty or not, the expression is incorrect, and one the use of which may grievously mislead. Man is not on his probation in this respect. The issue in this case is already decided; the Scripture hath concluded all men under sin; the sentence has gone forth from the Judge of all; and condemnation already rests upon every individual of our race. It is not a question whether man in his natural state shall be acquitted or condemned when he stands before God at last; this question is already decided; judgment has already gone forth against the workers of iniquity; it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). But whilst we cannot in this sense speak of man as in a state of probation, I am not prepared to go the length of saying there is *no* sense in which this may be affirmed of man. It appears to me that we may use this expression both in reference to man as under the religion of nature, and of man as under the offers of the gospel. In a

state of nature man is a moral agent, and he is there so far under probation that the character of his condition hereafter will be materially affected by his conduct here. As the punishment will bear a just proportion to the offence, and as all sins are not of the same enormity, it is obviously a man's interest to keep down the amount of his guilt, both as respects the number and as respects the aggravation of his sins, to the lowest possible degree; and of every man it may be said that he is in this respect on his trial here. He has to take care of himself in this respect. He is the subject of a great moral experiment by which his future condition is very seriously to be affected; and the conduct of this experiment is in his own hands. "In the present state," as Butler remarks, "all which we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is put in our own power." We are thus under God's moral government in a state of probation, even as respects this life; and as our present life has issues in that which is to come, we are here also under probation in reference to the future. Still more distinctly is man in a state of probation for the future when he lives under the offers of the gospel. These come to him as under condemnation with proposals of deliverance; and it is for the man to accept or refuse the offered boon. If he accept, he is pardoned, justified, saved, and blessed; if he reject, his guilt becomes deeper, his condemnation more severe, his doom more awful. Is not this, then, a state of probation? Is not every one who is thus circumstanced one who has, as Butler expresses it, his happiness or misery put very much in his own power? and what is this but to be formally and truly under probation for eternity?

(iii.) In consequence of sin, disorder and pollution have invaded man's soul. While we object to the assertion that man is born and begins his career with a morally vitiated and poisoned nature, we must hold that sin depraves and pollutes and disorders the inner nature of every one who commits it, and that, as the habit of sinning becomes formed, so the power of depravity increases until it acquires all the force of a second nature. It cannot be otherwise. As the little rift in the instrument mars and ultimately destroys the music, so sin, as a violent infraction of the due order of our nature, cannot but spoil and disarrange and ultimately impair our

whole moral constitution. "Given the fact of sin," says Dr. Bushnell, "the fact of a fatal breach in the normal state or constitutional order of the soul follows of necessity. And exactly this we shall see," he continues, "if we look in upon its secret chambers and watch the motions of sin in the confused ferment they raise—the perceptions discoloured, the judgments unable to hold their scales steadily because of the fierce gusts of passion, the thoughts huddling by in crowds of wild suggestion, the imagination haunted by ugly and disgusting shapes, the appetites contesting with reason, the senses victorious over faith, anger blowing the overheated fires of malice, low jealousies sulking in dark angles of the soul, and envies, baser still, hiding under the scum of its green-mantled pools,—all the powers that should be strung in harmony loosened from each other and brewing in hopeless and helpless confusion; the conscience, meantime, thundering wrathfully above and shooting down hot bolts of judgment, and the pallid fears hurrying wildly about with their brimstone torches,—these are the motions of sins, the Tartarean landscape of the soul and its disorders when self-government is gone and the constituent integrity is dissolved."<sup>1</sup>

That in its main lines the picture here given is not overdrawn, man's own consciousness and the experience of the race universally will attest. The testimony of Scripture also is clear and full on this point. In the most emphatic terms it announces the fact of man's depravity. See Gen. vi. 5; Ps. xiv. 1, 2; Isa. liii. 6; Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 19; Eph. ii. 1, 3; Tit. iii. 3; Rom. vii. 18; Jas. i. 14, 15.

What is represented in the last passage quoted daily observation and experience amply confirm. Every person must see how a man, left to himself, goes on in an ever-deepening course of evil; how the sinner, exempted from restraint, becomes ever more completely drenched in sin; how he abandons himself ever more and more to the dominion of iniquity; how he loses the sense of shame and debasement which the consciousness of guilt first produced upon him; and how he rushes with ever increasing eagerness to enjoy the banquet of sin, until all considerations of decency may be set at naught, and being past feeling, the man gives himself

<sup>1</sup> *Nature and the Supernatural.*

"over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Self being predominant, the natural desire is for that which pleases self, that which gratifies the lusts and passions that domineer over the soul; and this desire, once gratified, becomes impatient of restraint, and demands gratification with ever-increasing impetuosity. Sin once indulged in reacts on the desire which led to it, and this being thereby rendered more imperious and intense, provokes to further and deeper indulgence.

"Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,  
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi  
Fugerit venis."<sup>1</sup>

It is customary to speak of this depravity of man as *total*. The phraseology is correct, provided it be justly understood. It is, however, liable to misconception, and not rarely it is wrongly conceived. We shall certainly err if in maintaining man's total depravity we intend thereby to deny to him the possession of anything that is good. His *physical* nature, be it remembered, remains essentially what it was before the Fall, when God pronounced it "good;" and though it may be injured and degraded by sinful indulgence, its original faculties and susceptibilities may be preserved entire. So also with man's *intellectual* nature; in no case is it so bright and powerful as it would be in a sinless state, and in many cases it becomes enfeebled and marred by sin; but in itself it remains as it was originally, so far as its constitutive qualities and powers are concerned. We must admit also that man is the subject of many affections that are good and lovely, and that he does many things which are not only not morally evil, but are praiseworthy as morally excellent. To deny that there is anything good in man, or, what is equivalent, to affirm that his nature is wholly corrupted and depraved, would be to exempt him from responsibility. An eye wholly diseased would be incapable of seeing, and no blame could attach to the man whose eye was so diseased if he failed to see what he ought to see. In like manner, if our whole nature were wholly diseased and corrupted, it would be impossible for us to do what we are required as intelligent and moral agents to do; and thus we should cease to be

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Carm.*, ii. 2. 14.



blameworthy for not doing it. If sin could thus destroy our moral responsibility, it would at the same time destroy itself, for where there is no responsibility there can be no sin. The triumph of sin over man would thus be the ending of sin in our race. What, then, is meant by saying that men are totally depraved? All that can be properly intended by this is, that the ruling principle of man's mind and heart and life is ungodly. The mainspring of his active being is desire, what the apostle calls *ἐπιθυμία*, and this has either no moral character at all, or it is positively wrong; or, if right in itself, it is allowed to dominate to the exclusion of purer and nobler affections, and so becomes evil. Man's will thus comes to be under an ungodly bias. He is like a machine, the parts of which remain unimpaired, but in which the motive power is disordered, so that the whole action of the machine is depraved. If I say, "My watch is out of order and spoilt," I do not necessarily mean that every wheel is broken, and that it is utterly incapable of right action; I may intend to intimate merely that the mainspring is under a wrong pressure, which makes the watch work irregularly, so that it does not fulfil the purpose for which watches are made. So is it with man. The mechanism of his nature remains entire, and its working is not wholly for evil; but as in losing love to God he has lost the proper motive power of his soul, man totally fails to fulfil the end for which he was made, and spends his energies on that which is not godly, or is partial, fitful, and irregular in his moral activity. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever;"<sup>1</sup> but this end he, from an ungodly bias, either wholly ignores and rejects, or he determinedly sets himself to oppose and frustrate it. He is thus wholly perverted from the right way; as respects the great end of his being, he is wholly depraved.

(iv.) In consequence of sin, man is in a state of spiritual helplessness. He is so both as respects power to deliver himself from guilt and as respects power to deliver from depravity.

That man is unable to deliver himself from guilt must be admitted by all who form any just estimate of what guilt really is. Even where men are so sunk in ignorance as to

<sup>1</sup> *Shorter Catechism*, quest. 1.

imagine that by gifts and sacrifices, by penances and mortifications, they can procure the favour of God, it is still on the ground that man needs something beyond himself, something that shall relieve his helplessness, something that shall effect what he cannot himself effect, that he expects to obtain deliverance from guilt. He feels that his guilt has to be expiated before it can be forgiven. He feels that he cannot simply go to God and say, "I am guilty; be pleased to forgive me." He feels that something outside of himself must come between him and God ere he can obtain pardon; and the question which ever presses on him is that of old, "Wherewithal shall I appear before God?" (Mic. vi. 6). Without something that shall be valid as an expiation, he feels that he cannot stand in the presence of God or expect the cancelling of his guilt so as to escape the penal consequences of sin.

Some, indeed, have thought and taught that man may, by a mental state, so place himself in relation with God that God will, as a matter of course, pardon his sin and receive him into favour. Man, it is said, may sincerely and truly repent of his sin, wholly turn from it, unfeignedly renounce, abhor, and forsake it, and thus be in a state of mind which is right, and which will secure for him pardon and acceptance with God. With many this notion obtains, and it exercises a powerful influence for evil over not a few.

As presented in its most plausible form, this doctrine may be stated thus: Man can sincerely repent of his sin, can turn from it, and in the future be good and holy; and as God is omniscient, and can consequently with certainty know when repentance is really genuine and sincere, He can safely, that is, without any risk to His own government and authority, freely forgive the sins of those whom He sees to be truly repentant and reformed.

Now, in the outset, I must remark that I do not see what the element of the divine omniscience has to do here, or how the introduction of it at all affects the question, because the difficulty is not one of *fact*, such as the divine omniscience can remove, but one of *principle*, such as is equally grave under an omniscient as under an imperfect government.

1. It is assumed by those who hold the doctrine we are considering, that man may sincerely and perfectly repent, and

turn from sin to goodness. Let this in the meantime be conceded: the question we have to decide is, Can perfect repentance and reformation cancel past guilt so as to entitle the penitent to pardon and favour with God? Now, without entering at large into this matter at present, I would remark,—

(1.) As God is the perfect moral Governor, and as moral government rests not on force but on perfect rectitude, it is necessary that all His acts should be in righteousness and truth, so as to commend themselves to the moral sense of His intelligent creatures. Now, He has said in His law, under which He administers His government, that sin entitles the transgressor to punishment. His solemn declaration is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "The wages [the just and adequate reward] of sin is death." This is God's law; this is His public declaration to the universe of His intelligent creatures. If, therefore, sin is committed, the right and proper thing is that the penalty shall follow; and this sequence can be righteously suspended or set aside only on some ground that shall preserve the rectitude of the Governor unimpeached,—in other words, that shall accord with the moral nature He has given to His intelligent creatures. The question then comes to be, Does repentance, presumed to be sincere, appear to the moral sense of man to be a sufficient ground for God, as Governor, setting aside the claims of law and failing to keep His own word by preserving a sequence which He has declared to be certain? To this, I think, the moral sense of the race would reply in the negative. Where guilt, *i.e.* legal liability to punishment, has been contracted, the fitting sequence is that the penalty incurred should be inflicted on the transgressor; and where a governor has declared that such is the law under which his subjects live, it would be a departure from rectitude were he to accept repentance on the part of the transgressor as a reason for exempting him from the penalty he has incurred. Mere repentance can never cancel guilt; good conduct in the future can never compensate for violations of law in the past. No judge in any court would for a moment admit such a plea in bar of the sentence which the law required him to pronounce on a criminal. He might be satisfied that the man's repentance was sincere; he might be convinced that the man so utterly abhorred the crime he

had committed that there was every moral certainty that he would never commit it again. But the offence, nevertheless, would remain, and with that the law's demand that the penalty incurred should be endured; and no judge could ignore or repudiate this without incurring censure and doing injury to the government whose law he was set to administer.

(2.) This consideration is enhanced when what is proposed is not merely the forgiveness of guilt, but along with this the bestowment on the pardoned transgressor of immense benefits, such as even his best efforts, supposing him never to have sinned, could not have secured. If our sense of rectitude revolts from the proposal that God should set aside the claims of His own law and forgive the transgressor, simply because he has turned from his evil ways and resolves henceforth to be a good and obedient subject of the Almighty, surely much more does it revolt from the proposal of such a transgressor being on such grounds introduced to all the privileges of the kingdom of heaven.

(3.) It is to be borne in mind that though we speak of future sinlessness, it is really only the act of repentance or turning from sin in the past that comes into consideration as a ground of forgiveness. The subsequent sinlessness is only what the man is bound to; there is no merit in it that can give it a regressive or retrospective effect. It begins when the pardon is pronounced, and can have no effect in procuring that. For all that has gone before it is dead and inoperative. The question therefore, be it remembered, is restricted to this, Can mere repentance or ceasing to do evil be accepted under a righteous moral government as an adequate reason for the governor departing from his own law and exempting the transgressor from the penalty which, by breaking that law, he has incurred? To this the only answer which the moral sense of man can render is in the negative.

(4.) Those who think repentance a sufficient ground for the pardoning of the sinner must be prepared to maintain that by this the sinner becomes legally and morally *entitled* to pardon and blessing. The question is one of law and government, and in such a case we can proceed only on the ground of right and title; we ask, not what may be by some possibility, or through some act of sovereignty, but what *ought* to be and what

*must* be as determined by legal obligation? Now, no one can maintain that mere repentance, however sincere, can *entitle* a sinner to pardon, so that he can demand of the judge in equity that he shall be acquitted and restored to the enjoyment of privilege. And yet, if this be not maintained, it is simply foolish to assert that repentance furnishes a sufficient ground on which pardon and acquittal can be granted to the man who has transgressed the divine law and come under condemnation.

2. Even assuming, then, that the sinner can of himself truly repent and turn from sin, it is evident that this alone can never avail to secure for him salvation. But can the sinner of himself repent? That physically he is able to do this we must admit, for were this physically impossible no man could be justly blamed for not repenting. But morally and practically it is impossible. Where the disease of sin has once taken hold of a man there is no recuperative energy by which he can throw it off so as to deliver himself from it. Where sin has become a habit it acquires the strength and tenacity of a second nature, and only some power beyond and above nature can free man from its tyranny. As well might you expect a stream of its own accord to reverse its course and return to the fountain whence it sprung. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. xiii. 23).

More than this: Does not the very position that repentance may secure the pardon of sin involve the impossibility of the sinner's actually repenting? The repentance, it is assumed, is real and genuine. But genuine repentance is prompted by hatred of the sin, not by the prospect of forgiveness and favour as the reward of repentance. If, therefore, God were to demand repentance as the means or price of forgiveness, He would necessarily prevent its being the result of hatred of sin. Genuine repentance would thus be precluded; and so in the very act of offering to the sinner pardon on the ground of his repentance God would subvert the ground on which He asked the sinner to stand so as to obtain pardon. Thus pardon would be offered on conditions which the very offer would render impossible.

I have referred to man's inability to deliver himself from

sin, as well as his inability to clear himself from guilt and from condemnation. This has also to be distinctly recognised in the consideration of man's spiritual helplessness. Man is unable to regenerate and renew himself; he is unable to turn from evil to good, from wrong to right, from unholiness to God. He is unable to follow that course of perfect obedience by which alone he can fulfil his obligations as God's creature and subject; he cannot discern as he ought the things of God; he cannot walk so as in all things to please God.

This inability, however, is of a different kind from the other. The inability of man to deliver himself from guilt and condemnation arises from want of power to do what is requisite for the attaining of the object; the inability of man to be good and holy arises from a want of will or inclination to do what he has the power physically to do. Strictly speaking, the inability in this latter case is simply confirmed indisposition to do what is right, arising from spiritual blindness and depravity. Man has not lost the capacity to be holy; he has not ceased to be a free agent, choosing what he prefers, and determining his own acts; he is under no external force preventing him from being holy. The spiritual inability under which he lies is that of a mind set against God, destitute of the principle of spiritual vitality and activity, through carnality and worldliness and sinful indulgence incapable of discerning the beauty of holiness, and so environed and permeated by selfishness that all true love to God is excluded from it. This is a real inability, inasmuch as it hinders and prevents man from being holy, though it does not destroy his capacity for being holy.<sup>1</sup>

## ii. *Consequences of Sin to the World.*

These are the principal results and effects of sin as it affects man. Its baneful influence, however, extends beyond man to the world of which he forms a part. Because of man's transgression and apostasy a curse has come upon the

<sup>1</sup> On this subject see Edwards *On the Will*, especially Part I. sec. 4; Truman's *Essay on Natural and Moral Inability*, edited by Henry Rogers; Fuller's *Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*, Part III.; *Works*, vol. ii. p. 68; Hodge's *Theology*, vol. ii. p. 257.

world, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together in consequence. The world was made for man, and is inseparably linked with the destinies of him who has been placed over it as its proprietor and lord. In his fall it fell; in his sorrow and disorder it shares. Through him it has become subject to vanity; and it waits and cries for that deliverance which can come to it only as it comes to him in the glorious manifestation of the sons of God. That it is so the Bible forcibly declares; and observation and experience amply confirm and illustrate the declaration. "We see at a glance," says Dr. Bushnell, "that, given the fact of sin, what we call nature can be no mere embodiment of God's beauty and the eternal order of His mind, but must be to some wide extent a realm of deformity and abortion, groaning with the discords of sin and keeping company with it in the guilty pains of its apostasy." Men speak of the "order of nature," but in that part of nature with which man is connected perfect order is not to be found; rather does disorder everywhere prevail to a greater or less extent. "Fogs and storms blur the glory of the sky, and foul days, rightly so called, interspace the bright and fair. The earth itself displays vast deserts swept by the horrid simoom; muddy rivers with their fenny shores, tenanted by hideous alligators; swamps and morasses, spreading out in provinces of quagmire, and reeking in the steam of death."<sup>1</sup> Unexpected events disturb the course of things, falsify the calculations and disappoint the hopes of men. Storms and tempests sweep over the earth, altering the atmospheric conditions and producing in many cases widespread ruin and desolation. Inelement seasons retard or hinder the growth of herbs; famines and pestilences and epidemics desolate nations; decay lays its wasteful hand, not only on man and his works, but on the solid globe itself. A curse rests on the ground for man's sake, and only briars and thorns, useless weeds or noxious plants spring spontaneously from it. Nowhere is perfect beauty or symmetry to be found; rather does deformity and vitiosity more or less mar all visible objects. "The world is not as truly a realm of beauty as of beauty flecked by injury. The growths are carbuncled and diseased; and the children have it for a play to fetch a perfect

<sup>1</sup> Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 192.

leaf. . . . Even more significant still is the fact, because it is a fact that concerns the honour of our personal organism, that no living man or woman is ever found to be a faultless model of beauty and proportion." There are things, indeed, in the world around us which strike us as beautiful, and the perfections of which poets delight to celebrate ; but they will not bear the test of minute examination. Though

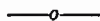
"Some flow'rets of Eden men still may inherit,  
The trail of the serpent is over them all."

The glory and loveliness, the serenity and calm of Paradise have for ever passed from our earth ; and so has man's sin disordered and injured the world, that before it can be restored to its original excellence and beauty it must pass through the purgation of the last fire.



# PART III.

## CHRISTOLOGY.



### CHAPTER I.

#### FIRST DIVISION.—THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

##### PRELIMINARY—JESUS THE MESSIAH.

WE now enter upon the third principal division of our subject, which we have designated CHRISTOLOGY.

We have contemplated man in his fallen condition as a sinner, and have sought to ascertain what the Bible reveals concerning that state. We have examined into the nature, the manifestations, the sources, and the consequences (especially to the human race in its relation to God) of sin. After this the mind naturally turns to inquire into the nature and conditions of that salvation from sin which it is the great design of Christianity to unfold. But before we can enter on this there is an intermediate inquiry to which we must bend our attention. The salvation which the Bible reveals as provided for man stands inseparably connected with the person and the work of Jesus Christ the Saviour, by whom alone it has been procured and through whom alone it can be enjoyed. On this point the testimony of Scripture is so clear that no one can peruse the N. T. without perceiving that it is to be received as one of the first and most indubitable truths of Christianity. When His advent was announced by the angel to Joseph the heavenly messenger said, "Thou shalt call His name JESUS [*i.e.* יֵשׁוּעַ, a contracted form of יְהוֹשֻׁעַ = 'Jehovah's help or salvation']; for He shall save His people from their sins." After His birth He was announced by the

angel to the shepherds of Bethlehem as "A Saviour, Christ the Lord." In the course of His public teaching He repeatedly announced this as the great object of His appearance in the world: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost;" "The Son of Man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them;" "I come not to judge the world, but to save the world;" "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." And when His apostles went forth as His ambassadors to men, the doctrine they everywhere proclaimed was that, whilst there was in Him salvation for all who would come to Him, there was salvation in none other. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus;" "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Matt. i. 21, xviii. 11; Luke ii. 11, ix. 56; John iii. 17, xii. 47; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 11; Acts iv. 12). These passages, and they are in the spirit of the entire N. T., are sufficiently clear, and they indubitably show that the salvation which man needs, and which Christianity offers to him, is in some way essentially connected with the appearance on our earth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with what He did whilst here. This renders it necessary that before advancing to consider the salvation of man in itself we should consider what Scripture teaches concerning Him by whom it was procured. It is this department of our subject to which the name Christology (from *Χριστός* and *λόγος*, meaning the doctrine or science concerning Christ) has been given.

In the narrative of the Gospels we have an account of the birth of Jesus, which happened in the ordinary way appertaining to the human race, though His conception is traced to a direct and miraculous operation of the Divine Spirit. We have preserved to us many incidents of His personal history, and many portions of His teaching as delivered both to promiscuous crowds and within the more silent circle of His disciples. From these we learn that He distinctly claimed to be the Christ or the Messiah promised by God to the

fathers of the Jewish nation, and repeatedly held forth in the ancient Scriptures as the object of expectation and hope to the people of God under the former dispensation ; and we perceive that whilst He exhibited undeniable indications of a true humanity, and frequently spoke of Himself as the Son of Man, He also spoke of Himself as the Son of God, and in terms which are appropriate only to one claiming to be divine. We find also that He continually acted with an independent authority both as a teacher and as a worker of miracles such as no other messenger from God to man assumed, whilst at the same time He ever professed to be God's servant and emissary commissioned to do His work and supremely ambitious of fulfilling all His will. Sometimes these apparently opposite aspects of His nature and standing are in the history brought into close and almost startling juxtaposition. Thus at one moment we see Him a toil-worn wearied man seeking refreshment in sleep from the fatigue He had undergone, and insensible in the depth of His slumber of what was passing around Him ; and the next we see Him rising from His repose and, with a voice of authority before which the elements trembled, hushing the fierce winds and waves that were like to have wrecked the vessel in which He was, so that instantly there was a great calm. Again, behold Him at the grave of Lazarus. Touched by feelings of human tenderness,—love for the friend whose body was within that tomb, and sympathy for his bereft and sorrowing sisters,—Jesus wept : but hardly have the bystanders had time to mark His tears, and say, " Behold how He loved him ! " when He moves towards the tomb, and His voice is heard saying, " Lazarus, come forth ! " (John xi. 43). And at that voice the grave gives up its dead, and death relaxes his hold on the mortal who had succumbed to his power. And see Him once more in the closing scene of His life here below hanging upon the cross : " And Jesus said, I thirst " (John xix. 28). There spoke the man suffering from the burning fever which the cruel agony He was enduring had sent through His frame. " Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise " (Luke xxiii. 43) : there spoke the more-than-man, the Being in whose hands are the rewards of the heavenly world, and who can dispense them according to His own royal will.

In the writings of the apostles we find exactly the same claims advanced for their Master, and exactly the same language held regarding Him. They continually assert Him to be the Christ, and they speak of Him as both human and divine in terms which are even more explicit in their doctrinal import than His own words as reported in the Gospels, though fully in accordance with these. We find them also taking up our Lord's declaration concerning the work He had to do, and the bearing of that on the salvation of men, and, with fuller elucidation and more minuteness of detail, explaining that as connected with His official appointment as the Messiah.

Now, from a survey of all these scriptural statements have been elicited the theological dogmas concerning the union of the divine and the human natures in the one person of Jesus; and concerning His office as the Messiah and the work therewith connected which He performed or is still engaged in performing.<sup>1</sup> Our business is to examine the scriptural evidence on which these dogmas rest, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they truly express the harmony of all the Biblical statements relating to the subject.

Our subject thus falls under two heads; the one relating to the Person of Jesus, the other relating to His Offices. Before proceeding, however, to consider either of these, it may

<sup>1</sup> The dogma universally received in the Christian Church for many generations concerning the person of Jesus Christ is that in that one person were united two natures, the divine and the human. In holding this opinion both Romanists and Protestants are agreed. On a point so familiarly known it is unnecessary to quote from the symbols of either party. Opposed to this dogma is that of the Arians, who deny the existence of a *divine* nature in Christ, but hold that He had in union with His human body a soul possessing an antecedent existence, and a superior nature to that of all other creatures; and that of the Socinians or Unitarians, who are philanthropists, maintaining that Jesus Christ was a mere man, and that His divinity consisted simply in His divine commission, and the superior honour which God conferred upon Him as His servant. "Arius acknowledges the flesh [human nature] alone to the concealing of the divinity, and in place of the man within us, that is, the soul, he says that the Logos came to be in the flesh, and dared to apply the perception of the suffering and the resurrection from Hades to the Deity." Athanasius, *contra Apollin.* ii. 3.—"De Christi essentia ita statuo illum esse hominem in virginis utero et sic sine viri ope divini spiritus vi conceptum ac formatum indeque genitum, primum quidem patibilem et mortalem, donec scilicet munus sibi a Deo demandatum in terris obivit, deinde vero, postquam in cœlum ascendit impatibilem et immortalem factum." F. Socinus, *Breviss. Instit.*, p. 654a.

be of advantage to consider the grounds on which it may be asserted that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah; because until this be made manifest we are not entitled to borrow the statements of the O. T. concerning the person and work of the Messiah, and use them as evidence bearing on the claims and work of Jesus.

Now, on this subject we might content ourselves with assuming, on the authority of our Lord Himself and His apostles, that He was indeed the Christ; for this they repeatedly assert in the plainest terms, and the fact is so interwoven with the whole of what they taught, that no one who receives their doctrine can refuse to receive this as a primary and essential part of it. We find, however, that neither did our Lord nor His apostles content themselves with resting this truth on their mere assertion of it as heaven-commissioned teachers; they furnished reasons for it; they made it the subject of argument; and, as we read concerning Paul, they mightily convinced men of it, opening and alleging that He was the very Christ (Acts xviii. 28, xvii. 3). Now, that which the great Author of Christianity and His inspired followers taught by means of reasoning, and on the ground of alleged evidence, it concerns us to learn and study in the same way; and consequently we shall endeavour to discover, and to state the evidence on which it may be confidently affirmed, that Jesus is the Christ.

The evidence to which our Lord and His followers appealed on this point was the correspondence between the actual facts constituting the personal history of Jesus and the predictions contained in the O. T. concerning the Messiah, especially such as were given to the ancient Church as criteria or tests, by which to try the claims of any one pretending to be the Messiah. It was even to "the Scriptures" that our Lord referred those before whom He laid the evidence in support of His claims as the source whence that evidence could alone be drawn, and it was out of the Scriptures that His apostles alleged the argument by which they so powerfully convinced men of these claims. To these, then, we must make our appeal as the only legitimate source of evidence on this subject.

The argument here is cumulative, and the entire strength

of it becomes manifest only when we have explored the whole body of O. T. predictions, and seen how it finds in the person, the life, the work, and the reign of our Lord Jesus its fulfilment, that we have the evidence for this in all its force before us. As, however, one great object of our present inquiry is to secure legitimate authority for adducing O. T. passages in proof of certain positions regarding the person and work of the Author of Christianity, it is obvious that to gain this end we must hit upon some shorter method than that of going over all the prophecies concerning Christ—to say nothing of the logical difficulty that would start up in our way were we first to use these predictions as proofs that Jesus was the Messiah, and then use them as proofs that being the Messiah He is possessed of certain characteristics of person and work which we wish to ascribe to Him. This would be a reasoning in a circle such as could not be admitted. To avoid this, then, we must select certain criterial passages regarding the Messiah recorded in the O. T., and which admit of being compared with facts in the personal history of our Lord. This comparison will serve to establish the fact that Jesus was the Person actually promised by God to the Jews; and being satisfied of this we may then pass to consider what the Bible generally declares concerning the Person and the work of the Christ.<sup>1</sup>

It is very certain that among the people of the Jews a universal expectation of the advent of the Messiah has prevailed from the earliest period of their nation, and does still prevail. It is equally certain that they ground this upon their own Scriptures, and hence they must have been taught to interpret these in such a way as to produce and sustain this belief. Following their own application of the passages in the O. T., we shall endeavour to show that they afford clear proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.

1. We can determine *a time before which* the Messiah was to come and *after which* He cannot be expected. Here we

<sup>1</sup> The distinction of some of the Germans between the Historical Christ and the Ideal Christ is valid and useful, so far as it respects and expresses the difference between predictions referring to and fulfilled in the man Christ Jesus whilst in this world, and predictions relating to His higher nature, His spiritual work, and His heavenly kingdom.

appeal to such passages as Gen. xlix. 10; Hag. ii. 6-9; Dan. ix. 24, 25.

GEN. xlix. 10 :—

“ A sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh shall come ;  
And Him shall the nations obey.”<sup>1</sup>

This does not mean that supremacy should be in the tribe of Judah until the Shiloh and then pass away, but that up to that time it should not pass away. *שילה*, from *שלה*, *quiescit*: this, from the form of it, must be the name of either a place or a person. Those who adopt the former view translate “until they shall come to or assemble at Shiloh,” and understand it of the assembling of the Israelites for worship at Shiloh. The passage may be so translated, but that this is its meaning is to the last degree improbable. (1) At the time this prophecy was uttered the Shiloh of the later books had probably no existence, certainly it had no religious pre-eminence over other places, so that Jacob’s words here would have had no meaning to his sons. (2) Israel came to Shiloh *as soon* as they had subdued Canaan; so that the supremacy of Judah was on this view very short-lived, or rather it is thus made to end before it began, for it was not till after the tribes *ceased* to go to Shiloh that any supremacy of royalty existed in the tribe of Judah. Those who understand this of a *person* regard it as a prediction of the Messiah as the Peace-bringer—the “Consolation of Israel.” It was thus that the ancient Jews understood the passage. In the Targum of Onkelos the passage is paraphrased, “until the days of the Messiah,” and with this correspond the Targum Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum. In the Talmud we read, “Rabbi Johanan asking what was the name of the Messiah, they of the school of Rabbi Schila answer, His name is Shiloh (*שילה שמו*), according to that which is written, until Shiloh come.” And with this agrees the remaining part of Jacob’s prediction, which may be viewed as a highly poetical description of the blessings of Messiah’s reign.

Seeing, then, that the Jews admit that this is a prediction

<sup>1</sup> *שֵׁבֶט*, a rod or sceptre = the emblem of authority or rule.—*מִחֶקֶק*, a legislator or ruler.—*מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו*, from between his feet. Is this = *מִמֶּנּוּ*?

of the Messiah, and seeing the prediction announces that He shall come whilst supremacy and rule and legislation are still possessed by Judah, we can give in the destruction of the Jewish empire a *terminus* posterior to which He cannot be expected, and also near to which He must have appeared.

It may be said, in bar to this, that long before Christ came the supremacy had passed from Judah, and the nation of the Jews, without a king, and subject to a foreign power, had ceased to be in any sense a dominant nation. This is quite true as regards political supremacy and dominion, and if the passage is to be understood of this, it supplies no criterion whatever as to the time when the Shiloh should appear. But it is not of this that the passage can be understood. At no time, even in its palmiest days, did the tribe of Judah sway its sceptre over the nations, or give law to the peoples in a political sense. It is of religious supremacy that this must be understood, and of that law which went forth from Zion. In Judah alone was the succession of the kingdom of God preserved; from it alone was the authoritative word of God sent forth. And this continued until the advent of Christ. As He Himself said, "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Matt. xi. 13). After that a new state of things supervened. The reign of exclusiveness and restriction ceased. The time had come when as little at Jerusalem as at Gerizim were men to worship God. The kingdom was to be free to all nations, and any that willed might enter. Then the supremacy passed from Judah, and the law no longer issued from Jerusalem. From that time forward Judaism became of no account in religion. The Shiloh had come, and to Him thenceforward was the supremacy to belong, and the gathering of the nations to be.

HAG. ii. 7.—This verse appears in A. V. thus: "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." There is, however, a difficulty in the way of this rendering. The word rendered "desire" (תַּמְדָּה) is in the singular, whilst the verb rendered "shall come" is in the plural (יָבִיאוּ); and these two, it is supposed, can be construed only by the noun being regarded as a collective, or noun of multitude. But in this case it cannot be rendered by



"desire;" it must mean "desired things," *desiderata*, or *desideranda*, or *desiderabilia*. This, however, brings up a difficulty on the other side, for how can "things" be said to *come*? To come is the act of a person, or at least of an animate being, and cannot be ascribed to inanimate objects. There is, however, a way of escaping these difficulties. In Hebrew, when the subject of a verb is a noun in the construct state, followed by a genitive, the verb sometimes agrees in number with the noun in the genitive. Of this several instances are found in the O. T. Thus, Gen. iv. 10, קוֹל דְּמֵי אֲחִיךָ בֹעֲקִים אֵלַי, "the voice of thy brother's bloods are crying to me," where the verb agrees, not with קוֹל, but with דְּמֵי; Job xxix. 10, קוֹל בְּנֵי־דִים נִתְבָּא, "the voice of the princes were concealed," where the verb agrees with בְּנֵי־דִים, and not with קוֹל. By applying this undoubted idiom of the Hebrew to the passage before us all difficulty disappears; the verb בָּא is in the plural, because it agrees with נָוִים and not with הַמֶּדֶה, הַמְּדֵת־הַנָּוִים being regarded as one word. The rendering of the A. V. is thus vindicated.<sup>1</sup>

When this translation is accepted there will be little hesitation in admitting that by the "Desire of all nations" is meant the Messiah. Of Him as the promised Deliverer and Peace-bringer it may be truly said, that all nations are, consciously or unconsciously, articulately or in dumb expectancy, desiring Him, waiting to receive Him and be blessed in Him; and of Him alone can this be said. Understood of Him, then, this utterance declares that He was to appear whilst the temple was yet standing; and though this house was very inferior to the former temple in outward splendour, God would so fill it with glory that the glory of the latter house should be really greater than that of the former. This can be understood only of that spiritual glory which the presence of the Messiah in the temple would bring. Nothing, as it appears to me, can be more inept and improbable than the supposition that the glory which the

<sup>1</sup> See the Grammarians. "The solution of this seems to be the intimate connection or oneness of two nouns in regimen." Stuart, p. 198. "The concord in this case may be regarded as logical concord, because regard is had to the logical relation which unites the ideas rather than to the grammatical relation found in the words." De Sacy, *Gr. Arab.* ii. art. 332.

prophet predicts for the later temple was the glory which the silver and the gold, the earthly material wealth, brought into it would confer; this could never have conferred real glory on God's house, and, in point of fact, there never was any such bringing of wealth to this later temple by the nations of the earth as would, even in point of material splendour, have made it to transcend that which Solomon built. Nor can the semi-Messianic interpretation, according to which the silver and gold which the nations are to bring to the temple symbolize the Gentile converts that were in the times of the Messiah to be brought into the Church, be accepted; for though in the prophets spiritual blessings are sometimes represented under the figure of material riches, it seems utterly incongruous to adopt such a representation here, where a comparison is instituted between the old temple and the new. To say that the latter should surpass in glory the former because the Church should in the times of the Messiah receive large accessions to its converts, and rich spiritual blessing, is to institute a comparison between two things which are not comparable. The things compared by the prophet are not the literal temple and the spiritual Church, but the first temple and the second temple as buildings; and what he says is that the latter, though inferior to the former in material splendour, shall yet possess a greater glory, for into it shall the Desire of all nations come. Understand this of the presence of the Christ in the temple, and all is plain and consistent; but, understood of the accession of Gentile converts to the Church, the whole representation becomes confused and incoherent. It was the very house which the Jews saw before them, and by the comparative meanness of which they were distressed, of which God said, "I will fill this house with glory." If something did not come into that house which made it more glorious than the temple of Solomon, the promise of God was not kept, and the prophecy was not fulfilled.

Here, then, we have the same terminus as before. The Messiah was to come whilst the later temple was still standing. Now, Jesus of Nazareth, claiming to be the Messiah, was brought into that temple in His infancy to be dedicated to God; He was hailed there by pious Jews who were

waiting for "the consolation of Israel" as the promised Deliverer; He Himself claimed it as His "Father's House," and therefore the place where He, as the Son, had the right of occupancy; when He entered Jerusalem in triumph, and the air was rent with the hosannas that hailed Him as the promised Son of David and King of Israel, it was to the temple He advanced; and it was there apparently that He received the intelligence that certain Greeks were desirous of seeing Him,—intelligence that called from Him the exulting exclamation, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." In Jesus, then, this prophecy and promise received its literal fulfilment. But had it not been fulfilled in Him, it would have remained to all time unfulfilled; for the torch of the Roman soldier which commenced the conflagration that laid the temple in ruins rendered it for ever impossible that to that house the "Desire of all nations" should come, and that it should thereby be filled with glory.

MAL. iii. 1.—It may suffice simply to cite this passage as distinctly indicating the same terminus. That the Person here referred to as the Messenger of the Covenant, and the Lord whom the people of God sought and desired, is the Messiah, there can be no doubt. Of Him, therefore, God says that He shall come to His temple. Either, then, He came whilst the temple at Jerusalem was yet standing, or He never has come, and never can come. Rejecting the latter alternative, it follows that the Messiah must have appeared much about the time that Jesus appeared claiming to be the Messiah.

DAN. ix. 25.—This passage is perhaps the most remarkable, as it is the most precise and conclusive of all. We have here a very precise indication of the time when the Messiah should appear and suffer for men; and if we can rightly calculate these sixty-nine weeks, we shall see how far the time indicated synchronizes with the time when our Lord appeared. There is a difficulty here, however, arising from the uncertainty as to *terminus a quo*, the time indicated by the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Was this the release granted by Cyrus (B.C. 536) to the Jews who chose to return to their own country, or was it the later edict of Artaxerxes granted B.C. 458, and of which we have an account in Nehemiah ii.? There can be little hesitation in concluding

that it was the latter, because it alone could be described as a command to restore and rebuild the city, and as consequent upon it alone was the wall built and the city arranged in streets. Taking the year 458 B.C. then as the starting-point, we have to count from it, first, seven weeks or forty-nine years for the completion of the rebuilding of the city, and then from that we have to count sixty-two weeks or four hundred and thirty-four years to find the time of the Messiah. Now forty-nine years from four hundred and fifty-eight brings us to the year 409 B.C. as the date of the completion of the building of the wall, and this we find was actually the time within which the work was completed, and the record of the book of Nehemiah closed. From this limit a period of four hundred and thirty-four years would bring us to the year twenty-five or twenty-six of the Christian era; and this would be just about the time when our Lord's advent was announced by His forerunner, and He Himself began to show Himself unto Israel. Here, then, we have a strikingly exact coincidence, and in that a fulfilment of a very precise prophecy, and an indubitable proof that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Sixty-nine weeks or four hundred and eighty-three years were to elapse from the going forth of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince; and we find exactly that time elapsed from the issuing of the decree of Artaxerxes till the appearance of Jesus Christ claiming to be the Messiah. Is it possible to resist the conclusion that He was indeed the Messiah so predicted?

It thus appears that the Messiah was to come at or near about the time of the cessation of the religious supremacy of the Jews, about the time when, as our Lord said to the Jews, the kingdom of God was to be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. xxi. 43), before the destruction of the temple, and near about the time of the appearance and crucifixion of Jesus. At this time also we find a prevailing expectation among the pious portion of the Jews—those who waited for the consolation of Israel—that the advent of the promised Messiah was at hand. Now, it is certain that no other appeared at that time, either claiming to be the Messiah or giving the least reason to believe that he was the Messiah. It follows, therefore, with

a strong probability that He was, as He professed to be, the very Christ.

2. We can determine the *family* of which the Messiah was to be born, the *place of His appearance*, and the *manner of His birth*. He was to be of the family of David (Isa. xi. 1; Ps. cxxxii. 11, lxxxix. 3, 4; Jer. xxiii. 5); He was to be born at Bethlehem (Micah v. 2); He was to be Son of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14). So well known was this among the Jews, that the prophet describes the mother of the Messiah definitely as the virgin *κατ' ἐξοχήν* (מְלֵצָה); and Micah speaks of her as "she which travaileth," without any further specification. These are minute criteria, and in the last case a singular one is adduced; as they all met and were fulfilled in Jesus the Son of Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David, and who was by a peculiar concurrence of circumstances at Bethlehem when her Son was born, the probability becomes very strong that He was indeed the Christ.

3. We know what the Messiah was to *teach*, to *do*, and to *suffer* (comp. Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, xlii. 1-7, lxi. 1. Isa. liii. 3; Ps. xli. Zech. xi. 12, 13. Ps. xxii. 12, 13, 16, 17, 18. Ps. lxix. 21, xxxiv. 20; Zech. xii. 10. Isa. liii. 9. Ps. xvi. 9, 10, etc.).

(1.) He was to be a prophet like unto Moses, claiming equal if not greater authority, and on the ground of this setting up a new dispensation (Deut. xviii. 18). All the prophets who succeeded Moses were to be merely supporters and subordinates to him. This was to be at least on a par with him, to speak with authority, and to teach the will of God in an independent and original manner. And as the Prophet of the Lord He was to have God's Spirit poured upon Him in unwonted measure (Isa. xlii. 1-4), and was "to bring forth judgment to the Gentiles," and the isles were "to wait for His law."

(2.) He was to perform many notable and beneficent works. He was to open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, to make the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6). He was to "proclaim liberty to the captives, to preach good tidings to the meek or poor, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isa. lxi. 1, 2).

(3.) He was to suffer. He was to be a man of sorrows and familiar with grief,—despised and rejected of men,—wounded and bruised. He was to be betrayed by His own familiar friend into the hand of His enemies; He was to be valued at and sold for thirty pieces of silver; He was to die through their persecution and amid their mocking; they were to pierce His hands and feet; they were to part His garments, and cast lots on His vesture; they were to give Him gall for His meat, and in His thirst vinegar to drink. Yet God was to keep all His bones so that not one of them should be broken; He was to be with the rich after His death, though His enemies had appointed His grave with the wicked; and He was to be raised again so as not to see corruption, and to be exalted to great glory and honour (Isa. liii. 3 ff.; Ps. xli. 9; Zech. xi. 10, 12; Ps. xxii. 7, 13, 16, 18, xxxiv. 20, lxix. 21; Isa. liii. 9; Ps. xvi. 9, 10).

Now all these met in a most remarkable manner in Jesus. He was a great teacher and prophet, just such as Moses; not a mere supporter of Moses, but acting with an equal and independent authority, so that His enemies tried to charge Him with setting aside Moses and the law. He spoke with an authority that no other prophet ever assumed. "He taught as one having authority" (Matt. vii. 29). Then, as respects His works, they were exactly such as the Messiah had been announced as to perform. When John sent two disciples to Him to say, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" His reply was, "Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached" (Luke vii. 20, 22). He healed all manner of diseases and sicknesses, so that the fame of Him went out into all the surrounding region (Matt. iv. 24).

Nor were His sufferings less truly such as had been predicted of the Messiah. He lived in a humble state, and often in extreme poverty (Matt. viii. 20). Men scoffed, and said, "Is not this the carpenter—the artificer—the son of Mary? And they were offended at Him" (Mark vi. 3). He was, as predicted of the Messiah, betrayed by one of His own familiars (Matt. xxvi. 48), was literally sold for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. xxvi. 15), was put to death by crucifixion,

which led to the piercing of His hands and feet (Matt. xxvii. 31), was mocked in His agony by those who stood around (Matt. xxvii. 31), had gall and vinegar given to Him when He said, "I thirst" (John xix. 28), had His body pierced with the heathen spear (John xix. 34), had His garments divided by lots (Matt. xxvii. 35), and after His death was laid in the family tomb of a rich man who begged His body, which had else been cast to the place of malefactors (Matt. xxvii. 57). Raised from the dead, though He really did die, He was not suffered to see corruption (Acts ii. 31). His body did not decay, but was raised again, so that in the possession of full vigour He went in and out among His disciples for forty days, and taught them the things concerning the kingdom which He had come to establish, and the foundations of which He had laid in His sacrificial death (Acts i. 3).

4. Finally, it was foretold of the Messiah that the great body of the Jewish people would not believe in Him, and that it would be among the Gentiles that His kingdom would be set up. "Who," says the prophet, in reference to this, "hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. liii. 1). He was to be despised and rejected of men; counted as one who was outcast from God, and visited with His judgments. But though Israel should not be gathered by Him, He should be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, for He should be a light to the Gentiles, that He might be God's salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa. xlix. 5, 6). How strictly and literally all this was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth needs not to be pointed out. He came to His own house, and His own people received Him not (John i. 11). Despised, rejected, insulted by them, and at last put to death, He proclaimed Himself the "Light of the World" (John viii. 12); from the cross on which the Jews put Him to death He said He would draw all men unto Him (John xii. 32); and when He sent forth His disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom, it was from amongst the nations, the Gentiles, that He told them they were to make disciples (Matt. xxviii. 19); and so it was in the Gentile world that the Church first struck its roots so as to become firmly established.

Such are some of the evidences from which it may be

concluded that Jesus is indeed the Messiah promised to the fathers, and of whom the ancient prophets wrote. It has been truly said that "never was such a body of prophecy given and accomplished in any other case." With all confidence, then, may we say, "We know that the Son of God is come," hail Jesus as the true Messiah, and appeal to the O. T. declarations concerning the Messiah for information, when we would know the truth concerning the Person and Work of the Author of Christianity.

[The general proof of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ given in this chapter was followed up by several lectures, in the course of which Dr. Alexander examined in detail the leading passages in the Old Testament which he held to apply to the Messiah, and therefore to Jesus Christ—on the ground of the proof already given that Jesus was the Messiah. As the substance of these lectures has already appeared in his work on *The Connection and Harmony of the Old and New Testaments*, and as considerations of space have to be kept in view, they are here omitted, and the reader is referred to that work for an account of Dr. Alexander's teaching regarding the Messianic predictions. On the same subject Hengstenberg's *Christology of the Old Testament* may also be consulted. The omission of these lectures will probably be all the less a disadvantage, seeing Dr. Alexander relied for support of his positions regarding the person and work of Christ chiefly on passages in the New Testament.—ED.]

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### I. THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Our attention will now be directed to the testimony given in the N. T. concerning the Person of Him whom we have found to be the promised Messiah, and to the work He accomplished on behalf of men.



We shall, first, consider those passages that relate to the divine nature of Christ; secondly, those which set forth His humanity; and thirdly, consider the relations of these two natures in Christ.

Under the first head we shall select those passages in which the names, attributes, works, and worship appropriate to God are applied to Jesus Christ.

### (I.) THE NAMES APPLIED TO CHRIST.

#### i. LORD GOD.

Luke i. 16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias," etc.

This passage is important as giving us the testimony of an angel expressly sent from heaven concerning Christ. It is conveyed in the form of a prediction concerning the relation to Him of His forerunner John, on occasion of the announcement of whose birth it was given. It is announced that John was to act the part of a herald, who was to go before and prepare the way for the advent of the great King. Now, in what language is this announcement clothed? In such language as naturally leads us to ascribe divine honours to Christ; for after stating that John should be instrumental in turning many to the Lord their God, he adds immediately, "And he shall go before *Him*," etc. Now, as the "*Him*" here refers to the Lord God immediately before named, and as John was the forerunner of Christ, it is evident that in the mind of the angel the Christ before whom John was to go was identified with the Lord God to whom John was to turn many, etc. De Wette and some other critics of neological tendencies try to evade this conclusion by saying that the meaning is, not that John was to go before the Messiah, but before the Lord God to whom the agency in all that the Messiah did is ascribed. According to this, it is admitted that the antecedent to "*Him*" in ver. 17 is the Lord God of ver. 16; but as it is denied that in ver. 16 the Messiah is spoken of at all, the argument which would infer the ascrip-

tion to Him of divine honours from His being identified with the Lord God is thus set aside. This is ingenious, but fallacious; for 1. when the term *ἐνώπιον* is used in reference to God as God, it means, and can only with propriety mean, *in His sight, in His estimation* (comp. ver. 6, *δίκαιοι ἐν τ. Θεοῦ*, just in the sight or judgment of God; see also ver. 15). But here it is used in the sense of local precedence, as is evident from the entire structure of the sentence, and also from the concluding words, which assert that the design of His going before was to prepare or make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 2. This last expression greatly favours the reference of the words "before Him" to the Messiah. For whom was it that John was to make ready a prepared people? De Wette himself answers, "The way of Jesus Christ," for he explains this concluding clause thus, "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared, *i.e.* ready to welcome His advent." If, then, it was to get ready a people to welcome His advent that John went forth, surely He before whom he went must be the same as He to prepare for the coming of whom he went. 3. John's own declaration after he began to preach to the Jews invariably was that he had been sent before the Christ. "Ye yourselves," said he to his disciples, "bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him." When, therefore, the angel in announcing his birth says, "And he shall go before Him," etc., the natural, the necessary conclusion is that he intends thereby his acting as the forerunner of Christ. Meyer says: "*ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ* can, in accordance with the context, be referred only to God (ver. 16). The prophets depict the entrance of the Messianic reign as the coming of Jehovah among His people, so that according to this God Himself is represented by the Messiah. In the person of the coming Messiah Jehovah Himself comes."

We hold the reasoning valid, then, which infers the application to Jesus Christ of the names "Lord God" from the juxtaposition of these two statements of the angel. It may be further observed that this phraseology is in full harmony with the language of the O. T. in reference to the coming and services of John the Baptist. He is there ever

spoken of as sent to prepare the way of Jehovah. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah," etc. (Isa. xl. 3). "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Mal. iii. 1). That these predictions relate to John the Baptist no one doubts who admits the authority of inspiration at all. Here, then, are two things very clear—(1) John was to be sent before to prepare the way of Jehovah; (2) John actually did go before Christ to prepare His way. It follows that Christ was the Jehovah before whom John was to come.

## ii. SON OF GOD.

In many parts of the N. T. Jesus Christ is designated the Son of God. Our Lord Himself frequently uses this designation of Himself. In His discourse with Nicodemus He speaks of Himself as the only-begotten Son whom the Father sent into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him should be saved (John iii. 16, 17). In one of His discourses uttered when He was in Galilee, He said, "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). Of the man who was born blind He asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and in answer to the man's inquiry, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" our Lord said, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee" (John ix. 35-37). When Peter, in answer to our Lord's question to the Twelve, "Will ye also go away?" exclaimed, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi. 67-69), Jesus did not refuse the title thus ascribed to Him; and on an earlier occasion, when, in reply to His question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," our Lord not only assented, but pronounced on Peter the benediction, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 16, 17). In His great intercessory prayer His

first petition is, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee" (John xvii. 1). And when on His trial the high priest adjured Him by the living God to tell them whether He were the Christ the Son of God, Jesus virtually admitted that this was the case by using the appropriate formula of assent, "Thou hast said:" and so the Jews understood Him; for when He hung on the cross they mocked Him, saying, "He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 43).

The title which our Lord thus assumed and asserted for Himself others of God's servants freely assign to Him. His forerunner John the Baptist "bare record of Him that this is the Son of God" (John i. 34). The evangelist John tells us that the record of Christ's life and doings has been written that men "might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God" (John xx. 31); and in his Epistles he repeatedly by this phrase designates Jesus as the object of Christian faith and confession (1 John iv. 15, iii. 23, v. 5, 13, 20), and as the author of salvation (1 John i. 7, iv. 9, 10, v. 11). When Paul was converted, "straightway he preached Jesus, that this is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20); in writing to the Romans he says that the gospel unto which he was set apart as an apostle was "concerning God's Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by His resurrection from the dead" (Rom. i. 3, 4); and in the same Epistle he speaks of serving God "in the gospel of His Son," of men being "reconciled to God by the death of His Son," of God sending "His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin," and of believers being "conformed to the image of God's Son" (Rom. i. 9, v. 10, viii. 3, 29). To the Galatians he says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that "God hath in these last times spoken to us by His Son;" declares that we have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God; warns men against apostasy from Christ by declaring that those who "fall away crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame," and describes such as

having "trodden under foot the Son of God" (Heb. i. 2, iv. 14, vi. 6, x. 29).

Of a truth, then, Jesus is the Son of God. It concerns us to inquire in what sense He is so designated. This is the more necessary inasmuch as others besides Him are in Scripture called sons of God—angels, for instance, because immediately created by Him, and resembling Him in majesty and purity; and men, who are His sons by immediate creation, as Adam was, and by regeneration, so as to morally resemble Him their Father in heaven. Of this advantage has been taken by those who refuse to admit our Lord's true Deity, as showing that in calling Him the Son of God nothing more is implied than in the case of those creatures, angelic or human, to whom the same appellation is given in Scripture.

It must be evident, however, that there is a peculiarity in the use of this designation as applied to our Lord which distinguishes it when so applied from all the other uses of it in Scripture. Not only is He emphatically and definitely *the* Son of God, but He is by Himself and others described as the "only-begotten Son of God." Whatever else may be implied in this, there can be no question that it implies Sonship in a sense absolutely unique and exclusive. Further, when it is said of this only-begotten Son that He is in the bosom of the Father, and that He, coming forth from the bosom of the Father, hath declared, *i.e.* hath made clear, hath clearly revealed to men, God "whom no man hath seen" (John i. 18), one cannot fail to perceive that as a Son He stood to God in a wholly different relation from that in which any creature can stand to Him. His being in the "bosom of the Father" can only mean that He was in such essential and intimate relation to God as is expressed in the declaration in the beginning of John's Gospel, that He was with God (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*); and His declaring to men that Being whom "no man hath seen" can only mean that He was so intimate with the Infinite God that He knew Him in a way no creature could know Him, and could reveal Him to men, not by a revelation made to Himself, but "by a peculiar, self-possessed, and original faculty."<sup>1</sup>

Further, our Lord speaking of Himself as the Son says, in vindication of His having done a work of healing on the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pye Smith's *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, ii. 241.

Sabbath day, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). The reasoning here evidently is, "God carries on His work on the Sabbath as well as on the other days of the week; and I, as His Son, do as He does, and have the same right to do so as He has." Clearly, therefore, our Lord understood His Sonship as entitling Him to stand on a footing of equality with God; and so also He was understood by those in whose hearing He uttered this declaration; for the Jews, we read, when they heard it, sought to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, "thereby making Himself equal with God" (John v. 18). That this was a just conclusion from what our Lord had said was not only implicitly admitted by Him, but He went on to confirm it by asserting, in still plainer words, His unity and equality with the Father: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. . . . For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father" (John v. 17-23). Our Lord thus not only asserted His right as the Son to work as God works, but He asserted that, as the Son, He was one in purpose and working with the Father, and that to Him was due that honour and homage which belong to God.

It must be evident, then, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in a sense in which no creature can be. The conclusion to which we are in consequence brought is, that by advancing this claim, He for Himself, and His servants for Him, advanced a claim to divine rights and honours for Him. This was how the Jews understood Him when He called Himself "the Son of God;" and it is very noticeable that it was for this and for this alone that the Jewish authorities adjudged Him deserving of death. "We have a law," they said to Pilate, "and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 23). It was as a blasphemer that they condemned Him to die, according to the

law which declared that "he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord shall be put to death" (Lev. xxiv. 16); and this charge they grounded on His calling Himself the Son of God, thereby, as they contended, making Himself equal with God. "No candid reader," as Whately remarks, "can doubt that the Jews understood Him to claim by this title a divine character, and He Himself must have *known* that they so understood Him. As little can it be doubted that they rightly understood Him. For if He had known that these words were understood differently from His real meaning and yet had not corrected the mistake, He would have been bearing witness against Himself." Either, then, it must be admitted that in calling Himself the Son of God, Jesus claimed for Himself divine honours, claimed equality with God, or it must be concluded that He died, not as a witness for the truth, but as the victim of a mistake which He not only would not take the trouble to correct, but which He in effect sanctioned and authorized as true. Which side of this alternative is to be adopted cannot for a moment be doubted by any mind in which the slightest respect for Jesus as a Teacher is retained; for if He thus allowed the Jews to believe that, by calling Himself the Son of God, He made Himself equal with God when such was not the case, He virtually admitted the charge on which He was condemned to be true, and thus went to the cross, not as a blameless victim, but as one guilty of the most flagrant of crimes.

### iii. SON OF MAN.

This appellation occurs only in the Gospels, and is used only by Jesus Christ Himself, with one exception,—that of Acts vii. 5, 6, where Stephen uses it of the glorified Saviour as seen by him in vision. That the apostles do not use this appellation in their writings may be accounted for by the fact that the object they had in view led them to lay special stress on the divine and supernatural aspect of the Redeemer; or it may be that they felt there was something in it which rendered it an unfitting one for them to use,—as if it beseeemed only Christ Himself to apply to Him such a title. The use of it by Stephen is attributable probably to the fact that he recognised in the Saviour, as presented to his view, the

well-known form of Him whom he had seen and known as He went in and out amongst men on earth.

We have only to look at the manner in which the Saviour uses this title of Himself to be assured that He attached to it an important meaning. It was not a mere equivalent for *man*, not a mere periphrastic way of saying "*I*," as some suggest;<sup>1</sup> it had in it a significance in relation to what the Speaker was as He appeared among men. Nor does the reference seem to be to His human nature simply, as distinct from His divine; for in no case in which it is used does there appear to be any special reason for giving prominence to this aspect of His complex nature. As little can it be regarded as a mere synonym of Messiah; for though it is occasionally used interchangeably with this (Matt. xxvi. 63 ff.; Luke xxii. 67 ff.; John xii. 34), yet it does not follow from this that the two have exactly the same significancy, inasmuch as the same object may be designated by titles which have different meanings.

When we look at our Lord's use of this title on the occasion of His trial, when in answer to the adjuration of the high priest to tell them whether He was "the Christ, the Son of God," He said, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64), we cannot fail to perceive whence this title was derived. In these words our Lord evidently alludes to Dan. vii. 13, where we read: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." That this passage has a Messianic reference all are agreed, and in virtually appropriating it to Himself the Saviour asserted His claims to be the Messiah. But it is to the Messiah not simply as such that the passage refers; it is to Him specially as invested with universal dominion. In its very origin and primary reference, then, the title "Son of Man" is a *royal* name

<sup>1</sup> Olshausen on Acts vii. 5, 6; Neander, *Leben Jesu*, p. 130.



—a name belonging to the Messiah in His glory and majesty, “King of kings, and Lord of lords;” and one reason, probably, why our Lord used it so frequently was to associate His claims as the Messiah with this prophetic description—to indicate that though He appeared among men poor, afflicted, and despised, He was nevertheless the great King whose dominion should embrace all peoples, and last for ever. That this was His design on the occasion referred to hardly admits of a doubt; and the special solemnity of the occasion, and of the circumstances under which our Lord spoke,—put upon His oath as He had been by the high priest,—lend peculiar importance to the declaration which He uttered. Why, it is natural to ask, did our Lord add this declaration to what He had already said in answer to the high priest’s adjuration? Why not content Himself with simply answering in the affirmative the question that had been put to Him? And why, especially, depart from the Messianic title “Son of God,” which had been used by the high priest, to adopt that of “Son of Man”? The answer to these queries seems to be, that He omitted this spontaneous declaration, and made use of this different title, for the express purpose of connecting His appearance, as He then stood at the bar of His enemies, humble, oppressed, and helpless, with the predicted glory of that kingdom which the prophet saw in vision as given to the Son of Man.

This name, then, is a name of dignity and majesty. Whilst, therefore, it undoubtedly relates to our Lord’s humanity (for none but a real partaker of our nature could be with any propriety called “son of man”), it must be held as expressing something beyond that, something higher than that. This, indeed, may be inferred from the mere fact of our Lord’s using it in the presence of men as a *peculiar* and *distinctive* appellation. Had He used the appellation of Himself in relation to God,—as it is frequently used of the prophet Ezekiel,—we should not have been justified in attaching to it any peculiar significance. But when, standing in the midst of persons every one of whom was in a sense a son of man, He calls Himself “*The* Son of Man” by way of distinction, it is evident that it is not in the ordinary and common, but in some new and peculiar sense that He meant the name to be understood. “Son of

Man" is a title which may be addressed to any man; but "*The Son of Man*" carries with it a claim to something not common to the race—something peculiar to the individual to whom it is applied. This suggests to us that in the humanity of Christ there was something beyond the common, something marvellous and supernatural. He was not this man's son or that man's son; He was the Son of Humanity, the Child of the Race, the crown and consummation of mankind, the true ideal Man in whom were embodied all the perfections and in whom were shut up all the destinies of the race.

The language of Daniel, to which our Lord referred in His answer to the high priest, presents the being whom he saw brought to the Ancient of days under a twofold aspect. On the one hand, he indicates the peculiarity of his condition by saying that "He was *like* unto a son of man,"—words which would have been inappropriate had it been a mere man of whom he was speaking; and, on the other, he indicates Him as the Son of Humanity, its flower, the true man, inasmuch as the kingdoms on the ruins of which the new kingdom of which He was to be the King, though human kingdoms, are yet represented only by brutal symbols; for the first time the nobility of human nature is exhibited in the new kingdom; in the others reigns the flesh, in this the spirit, according to which man is the image of God.<sup>1</sup> We may gain light upon the subject now before us—the proper force and meaning of the title "Son of Man"—from what St. Paul teaches concerning our Lord as the second Adam, and also as the representative man in whose exaltation to the throne of heaven we see a type and pledge of the elevation of man to supremacy over all things.

In presenting Adam and Christ to us as the first and second man, the apostle necessarily has reference to them in their representative character; for in no other respect were they first and second; not in order of time as living upon earth, for between them intervened a long series of men; not in respect of dignity, for in this respect Christ was first and Adam second. But as representatives of the race they stand out from all other men,—Adam the first, Jesus Christ the second. Now the race, as it were, looks back to the

<sup>1</sup> Gess, *Lehre von der Person Christi*, p. 9.

first Adam and finds itself revived in its representative; but it anticipates and longs for another man who shall equally represent it, and by whom it shall be restored. This restoring representative the apostle shows us in Christ. In Him fallen humanity finds not only the pattern of all that moral and spiritual excellence which man, made in the image of God, was at first created to manifest, but also the restorer of man's nature, by whom he is to be recovered from the death of evil and quickened into a new and higher life. In Him, also, he sees the representative and security of the ultimate triumph and glory of the race. Jesus, who for a little time for the suffering of death was made lower than the angels, is now seen exalted to the throne of heaven, and crowned with glory and with honour. In that lies the assurance of man's final supremacy over all the works of God's hands. All power and authority in heaven and earth are committed to Christ, and this He holds and uses for the final redemption of men. They that believe in Him shall be partakers of His glory. They that endure unto the end shall receive the crown of life. They that overcome "shall sit down with Him on His throne, even as He overcame and is set down with the Father on His throne." In Him, therefore, the race sees its restoring representative, hails the consummation of its own perfection, and recognizes the pledge of its final triumph and glory.

Now, if we look at the passages in which the apostle thus presents Christ as the second Adam, the restoring representative of our race, we shall find that he lays stress not so much on the real humanity of Christ as on the presence in His humanity of a higher nature. His being lower than the angels was not the natural consequence of His being of a nature inferior to theirs; it was because He was for a special end temporarily *made* so; and His ability to restore the race which fell in Adam rests on His being the Lord from heaven, the quickening Spirit who had stooped to take upon Him a nature inferior to His own that He might help it. It was, then, because He was more than man that He fulfilled His high functions as the representative of perfect humanity—the restorer and benefactor of the race. He had *assumed* humanity, and therefore, not begotten of any man, He was

emphatically, and in a sense peculiar to Himself, "*The Son of Man*,"—the Man in whom there was by divine power the prototypal and germinal essence of human nature; by whom that nature is redeemed and glorified, and who is "Man in the highest sense, in a sense fully answering to the idea" of manhood.<sup>1</sup>

From this it appears that the title Son of Man can be properly understood only by our ascending above the humanity of our Lord, and taking note of His divinity as tabernacling in His humanity. Indeed, apart from special revelations on the subject, this seems almost to be necessitated by the conditions of the case. No mere man, we may venture to say, *could* be with propriety called "*The Son of Man*." Only a superior nature is competent in assuming ours to enclose in His one person all that is essentially characteristic of the race, all that constitutes its glory and its nobleness, and who could undertake for the race so as to act on its behalf and secure the fulfilment of its destinies and its longings,—only such an one could fitly assume such an appellation as this. To Jesus Christ, however, such a title was simply due. He, in His proper person, God with God, took on Him our nature. He took it on Him in all its essential qualities and all its primeval excellences. He showed what it was normally meant to be, and what it was yet capable of becoming even in us the fallen ones and the lost. He, for the first time, did it full justice, and showed what a divine thing it is as it came from the hand of God. In Him alone is humanity truly represented.

Nor is this all. The title Son of Man belonged to Him in virtue of His relation to universal humanity. According to the flesh and by descent He was a Jew, the Son of David; and true to that law of our nature which bids us seek first the welfare of those who are nearest of kin to us, He directed His first efforts of beneficence to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." But He, from the first, contemplated the whole world as His field. His benevolent sympathies embraced all classes and tribes of men on the face of the earth; and He recognized it as the consummation of His work to "draw all men unto Him." He had His special relations to individuals

<sup>1</sup> Neander, *Leben Jesu*, p. 131.

of the race as all partakers of our nature must have; and He was true to these—true to the claims of friendship as well as to the ties of family; and yet He could say in relation to the great purpose of His advent, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. xii. 48-50). Now, He is the only partaker of our nature who stands in this common relation to the race as such. We cannot except even Adam, the common father of all; for Adam himself is part of that race to which Christ stood thus in relation. Of Him alone can it be said that His knowledge, His sympathies, His love embrace the entire human family from first to last. He alone can range through the entire circle of humanity and offer Himself as a friend and a brother to each individual of our race. To Him alone can every human being go with equal freedom and assurance. Thus connected, not with individuals or with a nation, but with the race as such, He fitly calls Himself "The Son of Man."

In fine, He is the Son of Man inasmuch as He is the Heir and Lord of the world. This earth was given to man by God for his inheritance. All things have been put under His feet. As man's representative He has been constituted heir of all things; and in His exaltation we have the pledge and assurance of man's final supremacy. It is as if the son of some princely house that had forfeited its possessions should appear, embodying in himself its qualities and its claims, and should by worthy deeds recover, not for himself alone, but for his family and name, their former dignity and estate. In such an one the whole family would willingly acknowledge itself to be, as it were, concentrated, and on him would its name with special emphasis rest. On this ground, then, as well as those already mentioned, does Christ's right to the title Son of Man rest.

When we look at the passages in which this appellation is used by Christ of Himself, we shall find the view thus given of its purport and intention confirmed; for in almost all of them there is a manifest allusion to the peculiar attribute of Christ as possessing a nature higher than the human nature, and as standing in a relation exclusively His own with mankind. Confining ourselves in the meantime to those

which occur in the fourth Gospel, the first which occurs is His declaration to Nathanael (i. 51), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Here our Lord intimates that through Him friendly intercourse between God and man should be re-established, and human nature be once more brought into communion with the unfallen powers of heaven. The next passage occurs in our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus (iii. 13), where He says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." Here He asserts that He had existed antecedently to His appearance on earth, and that as the Son of Man He even, whilst on earth, abode in heaven. In the next passage (ver. 14) He refers to His sacrificial death, where His representative and substitutionary character is by implication involved. The next passage (v. 27) has reference to His being the appointed judge of the world; this office belongs to God, but it is as Man that Christ is to appear to judge mankind; thereby affording a manifestation of God in human nature. In the next passage (vi. 27, 53) Christ speaks of Himself as giving meat to man which endureth unto eternal life, and more particularly as giving Himself to men that they may eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, and so live for ever; where His meaning is that it is by the reception of Him as incarnate for our redemption, and as thereby bringing nigh to us God, the source of all life, that we are recovered from the death of sin, and are restored to spiritual and endless life. Other passages relate to the power of the Son of Man as lifted up on the cross to draw all men unto Him, to His ascension to that place where He was before, and to the glory which is to accrue to Him from the completion of His propitiatory work; in all which passages the allusion to His superior, His superhuman character, and to the specialty of His working on man's behalf, is apparent. We have but glanced at these passages, but the most careful examination of them will only confirm the assertion that the title "Son of Man" cannot be understood as indicating merely our Lord's true humanity, or as merely marking Him out as the Messiah, but always carries in

it an allusion to that which was His peculiar characteristic—His appearing as incarnate God for man's redemption.

#### iv. THE LOGOS.

John i. 1-14.—This Prologue has, as you are aware, been the subject of extensive discussion, and very much learning and ingenuity have been expended upon it. Much of this, I cannot but think, might have been spared had the previous question been duly considered, Whether the evangelist, in what he says about the Word or Logos, here intended to teach an abstract speculative truth,—what Lücke calls a Theologoumenon,—or meant merely to state a fact pertaining to the Person of Jesus Christ. If the former view be adopted, it will, of course, become necessary to enter into the full investigation of the ancient speculations concerning the Logos and the Sophia, that so we may assign to John's words their just and full speculative import. But if the latter view be adopted, we may dispense with such inquiries, and limit ourselves to an exposition of John's own words, simply referring to extraneous speculations as these may help to account for the peculiar phraseology he employs. Now, which of these views we should adopt hardly affords room for doubt. Not only is it not the habit of the sacred writers to indulge in abstract speculation,—all their communications having a marked practicality of aspect,—but it needs only a glance at the tenor of the evangelist's statements to satisfy us that from the very beginning he is on the field, not of speculation, but of fact. Whilst the other evangelists begin the history of Jesus in time, he, giving prominence to His higher nature, begins His history by telling us what He was before time. The statement in the 1st verse—that the Word was in the beginning, etc.—is no more a theologoumenon than is the statement in the 14th verse—that the Word became flesh. Both are simply historical facts—facts pertaining to the Person of whom John is about to write. Without, therefore, doing any injustice to our subject, we may exempt ourselves from the necessity of considering the elaborate and learned attempts which have been made to illustrate this part of the sacred writings from Jewish speculation, and even from heathen philosophy.

(i.) In order to arrive at a just sense of what St. John here teaches, the first question we have to consider is, Does John speak here of a Person, or of something that is not a person?

In reply to this, some have said that the object of which John speaks is the divine attribute of Reason or Wisdom. But it needs only a slight consideration of his language to satisfy us that this cannot be correct. For 1. the word *λόγος* never has the meaning of reason as an attribute; in the classics it is used to denote the reason or ground of a thing, but never the rational faculty or the attribute of reason in an intelligent agent. When the sacred writers would express the idea of God's attribute of reason or wisdom they used the formula *σοφία* or *πνεῦμα Θεοῦ*. 2. John says that the Logos was *with God* (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*), *was God* (*ἦν Θεός*, not *Θεοῦ*), and *became flesh* (*σὰρξ ἐγένετο*). It would make the evangelist guilty of an idle tautology to suppose him to affirm that a divine attribute is with God, for this would be simply to say that an attribute of God is an attribute of God; nor is there any sense in which an attribute of God could be said to be God. How, moreover, could an attribute of God become flesh? God may communicate to men qualities which shall resemble certain attributes in Himself, such as wisdom, goodness, etc.; but no intelligent writer meaning to convey this idea would speak of the attributes of God thereby becoming incarnate. The evangelist's words naturally lead us to think of a Person. 3. In ver. 15 we have the testimony of John the Baptist concerning the incarnate Logos, and in this he ascribes to Him, as a Person, pre-existence, an ascription which Jesus repeatedly makes to Himself in His discourses (comp. viii. 14, xvii. 5). But if Jesus, who was the Logos become flesh, existed as a person before His incarnation, then the Logos which became flesh must before that have had a personal existence. These considerations leave no room to doubt that by the Logos here John intends a Person.

(ii.) If the Logos here be a person, there can be no doubt that the evangelist identifies Him in some sense with Jesus Christ. This follows from the statement in ver. 14, that "the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us; and we



beheld His glory as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,"—a statement which, as every one admits, refers to Jesus Christ. It is implied also in the declaration of John the Baptist in connection with what precedes. In further support of this, if that were needed, we might appeal to 1 John i. 1, where the phrase "Word of Life" is used as a designation of Jesus Christ, and to Rev. xix. 13, where the Faithful and True Witness is named the Word of God. These phrases are not identical with the one before us, but they may competently be adduced as showing that it was in accordance with John's *usus loquendi* to speak of Jesus Christ in his Personality as the Word.

(iii.) It is remarkable that St. John offers no explanation of this term as applied to Christ. He introduces it as one which his readers would at once understand in its application to Jesus Christ without any explanation from him. Now there are only two suppositions, I think, on which this can be accounted for: Either the title was one with which they were familiar as a common and accredited designation of the Messiah; or the term carried in it its own meaning; so that in calling Jesus the Logos, John no more needed to explain himself than when he calls Christ the Life and the Light. Between these two suppositions our choice lies. Now there is one consideration which seems decisive against the former, and that is, that nowhere do we find the Messiah thus designated except by John, nor is there a shadow of evidence that this term was ever known as a designation of the Messiah until it was applied to Jesus Christ by John. It is true, we find in the Jewish Targums the phrase *בְּיָמָא דִּי*, *the Word of Jehovah*, and such abstract terms as *קָרָא* = *בְּבוֹד*, *glory*, or *שְׁכִינָה*, *indwelling*, employed to designate God Himself; but there is no evidence that under this phraseology the ancient Jews ever thought of the Messiah. In the O. T. also we have personifications of divine wisdom, and these reappear in still bolder form in some of the apocryphal works; but these are merely poetical modes of representation, and throw no light upon the application of the term "Word" by John to Jesus Christ in His pre-existent state. Nor is any help to be obtained from the writings of Philo, a Jew nearly contemporary with our

Lord ; for though his writings are full of speculations about the Logos, it is, to say the least, very doubtful if he in any case ascribes personality to the Logos, and it is very certain that he never applies this term to the Messiah. With him the Logos was a fine speculation—a theosophic mode of representing certain philosophic conceptions as to the relation of God to the created universe. There is therefore no evidence whatever that the Christians to whom John wrote were familiar with this as a designation of the Messiah, and so would understand it in consequence of such familiarity without any explanation.

We revert, therefore, to the other hypothesis, that this word carries its own meaning with it ; in other words, that the simple idea presented to the mind by this word is so truly descriptive of Jesus Christ that it may be used without any qualification as a designation of Him, just as the words life, light, manna, passover, peace, etc., elsewhere are used. But this throws us upon the inquiry, In what sense is Jesus Christ the Word ? for it must be allowed that the term does not so immediately yield up its meaning as do some of those other terms with which we have compared it. Now, in reply to this I think the oldest answer is still the best. “The Son,” says Origen, “may be the Word because He announces the hidden things of His Father ;”<sup>1</sup> or, as another of the Fathers gives it, because He is the interpreter of the will of God. The idea here is, that as a word is the interpreter of the hidden invisible spirit of man, so Jesus, coming forth from the bosom of the Father, of Him whom no man hath seen at any time, has revealed Him to us. Words bridge over the chasm between spirit and spirit, and form a medium of communication between mind and mind. They are winged messengers that come from that which sense cannot descry, and through the medium of sense convey to others knowledge of that hidden power that sent them forth. They are thus emphatically revealers of the invisible, palpable exponents to us of what, but for them, must ever have remained hidden from us, being supersensible. In like manner has Jesus Christ made known and expounded God to us. In Himself God is utterly beyond our knowledge ; we cannot by search-

<sup>1</sup> *In Joan.*, Tom. i. § 42.

ing find Him out ; and it is only as He reveals Himself to us that we can have any just thought of Him at all. But of all the revelations of Himself which He has given to men, none is so full, so clear, so impressive, as that which He has given in the Person of His Son. Here all the other rays of light which God has sent forth to illuminate our darkness are concentrated in one blaze of glory. Here all the other words which God hath spoken to men are gathered up and condensed into one grand and all-embracing utterance, which therefore becomes emphatically *The Word*—the living personal manifestation of God to men.

It has been objected to this explanation that it takes λόγος as equivalent to λέγων, for which there is no authority. But this objection is valid only on the assumption that it is merely by His speaking, by His teaching, that Jesus is the revealer or manifester of God. The objection disappears when we regard Jesus as Himself in His Person the revelation and manifestation of God. He is thus the λόγος, not as ὁ λέγων, but as Himself the apocalypse and revelation of the Invisible.

The explanation thus given of the term as here used of the higher nature of our Lord seems to me preferable to that suggested by Beza, who takes λόγος as equivalent to λεγόμενος, and understands the term of Christ as the Person spoken of, the subject of prediction and promise. For such an interpretation there is no authority in the usage of the language; the metonymy thus supposed is in itself harsh; and, as there were other modes of describing the Messiah as the object of promise, both more natural and more accordant with use, it is altogether improbable that John, had he intended to convey that idea, would have departed from such accustomed forms of expression to employ one so much less appropriate and intelligible.

The interpretation proposed, besides having the advantage of not depending for its support upon any extraneous source, such as would imply, on the part of the evangelist, acquaintance with speculations to which he was not likely to have turned his attention, or would impute to him a tacit sanction of modes of representing divine things which his own doctrine would openly condemn, has also the great advantage of being

in full accordance with Biblical representations and modes of thought. The attentive reader of the O. T. cannot have failed to observe how there runs through the writings which it contains a distinction between God as He is in Himself,—hidden, invisible, unsearchable, incomprehensible; and God as He is in relation to His creatures,—revealed, manifested, declared. Sometimes this is conveyed very distinctly and unmistakably, as by the appearances of the Angel of Jehovah (מלאך-יהוה), who is both Himself Jehovah and yet distinct from Jehovah—a representation which can be rendered intelligible only on the supposition of a distinction between God as revealed and God as concealed. In other cases the same idea is presented by certain forms of expression which presuppose it, and are explicable only on the assumption of it. Such, for instance, is the frequently-recurring expression, the “Name of God”—an expression which indicates something distinct from God as God, but to which, nevertheless, personal and divine qualities are ascribed; for men are commanded to put their trust in God’s name, God serves men by His name, God puts His name in a person or place, the result of which is that God is in that person or place; and many other similar usages, which can be explained satisfactorily only on the supposition that the name of God is God, not as He is in Himself, but as He is revealed to men. Such also is the distinction made between the “face of God,” which no man can behold, and His “back,” which Moses was permitted, in compliance with his earnest request, to see. As the countenance is the index of the soul, the spiritual part, so to speak, of the body, the face of God is His inner essential glory, His essence as a Spirit; and as the back part of a man is purely material, and subject to the scrutiny of the senses, so this is used by God to denote what of Him may be revealed, and by being revealed may be known by His creatures. What that is He Himself expressly declares when, in the same connection, in answer to the prayer of Moses, “Show me Thy glory,” God says, “I will make all my goodness [properly, *beauty, majesty* <sup>1</sup>] to pass before thee, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.” This was what Moses could see, and this—the divine name or

<sup>1</sup> The word in the original is כְּבוֹד, *kāb*, not מְדָבָר. See Ex. xxxiii. 19.

revelation of God, the beauty, the manifested perfection of God—He would make to pass before him; and it is of this that God speaks as His back, because it could be made known to men in contradistinction to His face, His essential being, which no man could see and live. These instances may suffice to show that the idea of a distinction between God as He is in Himself and God as revealed to His creatures could not but be familiar to an attentive reader of the ancient Jewish Scriptures; so that St. John, in representing the great Revealer of God as with God and as God, would not overstep the limits of enlightened Jewish thought and intelligence.

Still more manifestly is this representation of Jesus Christ as the Revealer of the Father in harmony with N. T. statements and forms of expression. We find, for instance, that it was under this character that our Lord was introduced to the Jews by His forerunner, John the Baptist. "No man hath seen God at any time," said he; "the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." These words carry one back to the scene at Horeb, already referred to, and to the declaration there made to Moses, that God was both incomprehensible and capable of being known; and they announce that in Jesus the Christ was the grand revelation of God—the supreme manifestation of the invisible—the presentation to men of one whose proper dwelling-place is in the bosom of God, and who is there even while revealing God to men on earth. Wholly in accordance, also, with the representation here given is our Lord's own statement to Nicodemus, that He, the Son of Man, had come down from heaven and yet was even then in heaven (John iii. 1-3)—a statement which is intelligible only upon the supposition of a distinction such as the evangelist indicates at the outset of his Gospel. We may compare also such a passage as that in Heb. i. 13, where God is represented as speaking to us by His Son, who is described as the radiance (*ἀπαύρασμα*) of this glory, and the express image or representation (*χαρακτήρ*) of His Person—a figurative representation, but the meaning of which obviously is, that as we acquire our knowledge of a luminous body like the sun by the radiance that streams from it, and of a seal by the

impression it leaves on the wax, so we obtain our knowledge of Him whom we cannot ourselves see or immediately know through the medium of Him whom He hath sent as His Revealer. It is in accordance with the same mode of representation that St. Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as the image of the invisible God, and as having been in His pre-existent state "in the form of God;" as on earth, after His incarnation, He manifested God to men in His Person as well as in His teaching, so in heaven, before His incarnation, He had a form peculiar to Deity, and which presented to the view of angels—who, being finite beings, can no more than we gaze on the essential glory of God—an appreciable revelation of the Infinite and Invisible.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

##### (II.) DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND WORSHIP APPLIED TO JESUS CHRIST.

###### i. OMNIPRESENCE.

Matt. xviii. 20: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." These words were spoken by our Lord for the purpose of defining His Church as a body exercising spiritual power, and at the same time of pointing out whence the authority belonging to His Church in the exercise of that power is derived. His Church is wherever two or three are gathered in His name, and that Church has power to pronounce final decisions because He is in the midst of them when so assembled. In giving this declaration our Lord plainly assumes to Himself the attribute of OMNIPRESENCE, for only an omnipresent being can fulfil what is implied in this promise.

That the Saviour *intended* His words to be so understood appears evident from the fact that He here promises to be to His followers exactly what God promised to His people of old:

"In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and will bless thee." If this promise involves omnipresence, not less does that of Christ to His disciples.

It makes no difference what view we adopt as to the mode in which He would fulfil this promise, whether by a personal presence or by a communication of His Spirit to His assembled disciples; for as we know not how God is omnipresent, we cannot pretend to say which of these two modes is alone compatible with this attribute. All that we are safe in affirming is, that as God promised to be with His children of old in all places where His name was recorded, so Christ promised to be in the midst of His followers wherever two or three of them were gathered together; and the latter of these is no less an assumption of omnipresence than the former. Whether the author of the promise is to fulfil it by being in some sense personally present, or by exercising an influence on those assembled, is a question that carries us into regions beyond our powers of investigation. All we know is, that to be in any true sense whatever in the midst of every assembly whenever and wheresoever gathered together in the name of Christ, and so by implication to be present at the same moment in myriads of such scattered over the face of the globe, is what none but God can accomplish.

But, reply the opponents of our Lord's proper Deity, it is not in a *true* sense, but only in a figurative one that Christ promises to be in the midst of those gathered together in His name. This is the resource of all who find it inconvenient to accept Scripture in its plain and obvious meaning; but it is one which a candid and sincere inquirer will be very slow to adopt. No doubt Scripture uses figures, and our Lord occasionally employs them; but that He does so in any particular case is a position for which some evidence is requisite before any one is entitled to assume it. In the present instance no such evidence is adducible. On the contrary, everything in the circumstances and in the form of our Lord's statement leads to the conclusion that His words are to be taken in their plain, literal, and obvious meaning. If ever there was an occasion on which it behoved Him to speak plainly it was this; for here He was laying down principles by which the whole polity and discipline of His

Church was to be influenced till the end of time. A mistake as to the very basis of all Church authority might be unspeakably mischievous, and it certainly behoved the Founder of the Church to avoid all fruitful sources of mistake in the form in which His principles were inculcated. The presumption, then, is that this is not a figurative statement; and, at any rate, that it is so is not to be conceded without proof. But, let us ask, if this language be figurative, what is the literal truth couched under the figure? To this the reply is, "That Christ was present with His disciples by that authority which He had delegated, and by the powers which He had communicated to perform miracles in His name." These are the words of the "Annotator" on the *Improved Version*, and they strikingly show how readily those who try to put false glosses on Scripture are betrayed into admissions fatal to their own system, for can anything be more absurd than to hold that a mere man has power to communicate to other men the faculty of working miracles in his name? What is this but to ascribe omnipotence to Jesus Christ, and that *à fortiori*; for if it would imply omnipotence for a being to perform miracles himself in his own name, how much more when that being communicates to others the power of working miracles in his name? Here, then, is the strange position in which this unlucky "Annotator" has placed himself. In order to preclude a passage being so interpreted as to prove that Jesus Christ is possessed of the attribute of omnipresence, he ascribes to Him omnipotence, and thinks that he has thereby shut Him out from divine honours. An antagonist who thus replaces with the left hand as much as he takes away with the right is at least harmless, if he be not respectable. But, passing this, there is another gross absurdity in this interpretation of the "Annotator." He overlooks the fact that our Lord's words are uttered for the purpose of pointing out the source of that authority which His Church possesses; and accordingly he falls into the blunder of making our Lord adduce that authority as the source of itself. Our Lord's argument virtually is: Every body, however small, assembled in my name is invested with authority from me to exercise discipline, because I am there to sanction and sustain them. Now this is clear and intelligible. But, substitute for our



Lord's assertion concerning His presence what the Annotator says this assertion means, and what does our Lord's reasoning become? Why, this: Every body, however small, assembled in my name has authority from me to exercise discipline because of the authority I have given it. If this be not making a thing the reason of itself, it is giving to our Lord's word a meaning so jejune and feeble as to render them altogether unworthy of Him. But enough of this. Such parodies on Scripture are worthy of being noticed only for the sake of showing how pitiful are the resources of error when it tries to hide or obscure the clear light of Scripture.

Before passing from this passage it may be worth while to observe that similar modes of expression to those used by our Lord were in use among the Jews to convey the idea of the divine presence with the servants and worshippers of God. Thus, in the *Pirke Aboth* (iii. 1) it is said, "Two who sit at table and converse concerning the law, the Shekinah rests on them, according to Mal. iii. 16;" "If two or three sit in judgment, the Shekinah is with them;" and many other instances collected by Schöttgen and Wetstein.<sup>1</sup>

Closely allied in import with the passage we have been considering is our Lord's farewell assurance to His people, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. The language here is altogether divine: "I am with you." If you compare this with the words of Nicodemus, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him," the full force and meaning of the assurance will be apparent: "I send you forth to do great deeds—deeds such as no man can perform; but be not dismayed, for lo I am with you." What is this but to assume the divine prerogative? It is only in keeping with this when He adds a claim to omnipresence in the assurance He gives to them that His being with them shall continue "always, even to the end of the world." It is a vain and shallow attempt to get rid of this to explain the end of the world as

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious passage in the *Kuran* evidently borrowed from these Jewish modes of speech. It is in the 58th Sura: "God knoweth what is in heaven and what is on earth; for there cannot be three in an assembly but He will make a fourth; nor five but He will be the sixth; and whether they be many or few, God is with them."

meaning the end of the Jewish dispensation, for 1. the words cannot by any fair interpretation carry that meaning; taken in connection with frequent usage of them by our Lord in His previous discourses with His disciples, they can only mean the completion of the present state of things—the state of time; and hence De Wette says on them, “comp. chap. xxiv. 3, according to which we must understand here the period of the second coming of Jesus;” after that, as Alford admirably remarks, “He will be no more, properly speaking, *with us*, but we *with Him* (John xvii. 24) where He is” (*Greek Testament, in loco*). 2. Even this interpretation, if admitted, would not serve the purpose of those who adduce it, for the words of Christ would still contain an assumption of the divine attribute of omnipresence, inasmuch as to be with His people all the days during which the Jewish dispensation was to last, in whatever part of the world they were, was as incompatible with the conditions of a creature existence as His being with them to the end of time. As in creation the making of an insect is as much an evidence of divine power as the making of a man, so omnipresence for a year is as much an evidence of Deity as omnipresence for a millennium. “In infinito est nullum majus et minus.”

In His conference with Nicodemus our Lord uses the remarkable statement: “No man hath ascended into heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John iii. 13). Our Lord uttered this as illustrative of His claims to teach *ἐπουράνια*, or heavenly truths. We need not stop to inquire whether the ascending up into heaven of which our Lord here speaks refers proleptically to His ascension, or is to be taken metaphorically as significative of familiarity with heavenly things. The latter, it must be confessed, seems the more natural interpretation. But it will not follow from this that the coming down from heaven means no more than the communicating of things supernaturally revealed, for in no case is the phrase so used, and the mere fact of its being put in antithesis to the ascending does not prove that it must be understood in exactly the same way. Even De Wette admits that there is a reference here to the doctrine of the supernatural origin of Jesus Christ, and that the phrase denotes the abiding actual revelation of

God in Christ, whilst the *ἀναβαίνειν* denotes only the ideal intercourse of the intelligent spirit with God. He had not only obtained divine knowledge from God, but the source of that divine knowledge had, as it were, "come down, and was dwelling in Him." Hence what follows, "who is in heaven," not "who *was* in heaven," but "who *is*,"—a phrase which De Wette compares with *ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς* (i. 18), which denotes intimate and essential union with God. The phrase before us can mean nothing less than that He brought heaven with Him to earth; heaven was about Him, all its light, its joy, its purity, to those who could with a spiritual eye discern it.

In this passage the pre-existence and omnipresence of Christ are undoubtedly involved: the former is affirmed in the clearest manner in John viii. 58, "Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." "That Jesus here," says De Wette, "ascribes to Himself pre-existence is certain." He adds, however, that "it is only in an ideal sense." What he intends by this I cannot say, for he carefully discriminates it from the mere nominal sense of Socinus and Grotius. The only explanation he gives is "ideal as contrasted with His actual appearance on earth." If by this is meant a state of spiritual existence as opposed to one manifested in bodily form, we may accept it as substantially correct, though most unfortunately expressed. Lücke says that all unbiassed exegesis of these words must recognize in them a declaration of the essential pre-existence of Christ. Even Kuinoel argues for this meaning of the words against the glosses of Socinus and the parodies of Paulus. These it may suffice to mention; they refute themselves. Socinus: "Before Abraham became Abraham, *i.e.* a father of many nations, I am or have become the Messiah." Wetstein: "Before Abraham was, I am or was the Christ, *i.e.* in the decree and promise of God." Paulus: "Before Abraham was born I am He whose advent Abraham foresaw and was glad." All these, as Alford justly remarks, "are little better than dishonest quibbles." Our Lord's words admit of but one meaning—"Before Abraham was born, or came into existence, I am." Mark the distinction between *γενέσθαι* as applied to Abraham and *εἶμι* as applied to Christ. Notice

also the use of the *present* εἰμι. Πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι, before Abraham came into being. Abraham had become; there was a time when he was not, and a time when he began to be. But ἐγὼ εἰμι, I am. Here is an assertion of simple absolute existence. This ἐγὼ εἰμι is parallel to the אֲנִי הוּא of the O. T., the affirmation of Jehovah concerning Himself. This is plainly the assertion, not only of pre-existence, but of that independent and absolute existence which God alone has. Our Lord does not say, "Before Abraham was, I was;" but, "Before Abraham came into being, I am." "He claims pre-existence indeed; but He does not merely claim pre-existence, He unveils a consciousness of Eternal Being. He speaks as one on whom time has no effect, and for whom it has no meaning. He is the I AM of ancient Israel; He knows no past as He knows no future; He is unbeginning, unending Being."<sup>1</sup> Jesus thus asserts for Himself a peculiar attribute of God, that of eternal existence; and so the Jews understood Him; for no sooner had He uttered this solemn declaration than they took up stones to cast at Him, regarding Him as a blasphemer, and deserving to receive the penalty which their law adjudged to such. Had they mistaken His meaning, our Lord was bound to set them right, and He would certainly have done so, and not have suffered Himself to rest under so dreadful a charge. But He offered no explanation such as would have appeased their wrath; He simply withdrew Himself from them, leaving with them the belief that He had asserted for Himself a quality which belongs only to God. At a later period we find our Lord solemnly asserting for Himself eternal existence in language which elsewhere is used of the supreme God. When He appeared to the beloved disciple in Patmos, and John, overwhelmed by the glory of the vision, fell at His feet as dead, the Lord laid His right hand on him, and said, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. i. 17, 18). Only a few verses before in the same chapter we find God the Father saying of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord God, He that is, and that was, and that is to come, the

<sup>1</sup> Liddon's *Bampton Lect.*, p. 188, 2nd ed.

Almighty" (ver. 8); and presently our Lord appears on the scene, and says of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." It cannot admit of a doubt that our Lord here asserts for Himself that eternity of being which is the proper attribute of God.

## ii. OMNIPOTENCE.

Our Lord, before He left His disciples to ascend into heaven, said to them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). This is an assumption by our Lord to Himself of omnipotence. It is true He says this is "given" to Him; but this does not diminish the greatness of the claim. It was given to Him as the Mediator, the Christ; but ere it could be given to Him He must have had a capacity to receive it. This no mere creature has or can have, and so far as Jesus was partaker of a created nature, so far He was incapable of receiving all power in heaven and in earth. There must therefore be in Him a nature superhuman, superangelic, a nature essentially divine; else was this solemn assertion of His a mere empty boast.

What our Lord thus claimed for Himself His apostles proclaimed to men as belonging to Him. "We look," says St. Paul, "for the Saviour from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, and conform it to the body of His glory, according to the energy whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 21). "Such language," Dr. Wardlaw justly observes, "cannot with propriety be used respecting any being who is not possessed of *omnipotence*; and He who is possessed of omnipotence can be no other than the true God."<sup>1</sup>

## iii. OMNISCIENCE.

"I am He," said our Lord Himself, "which searcheth the reins and hearts" (Rev. ii. 23), words which are the echo of those which God uses when He says, "I, Jehovah, search the heart and try the reins" (Jer. xvii. 10); in both cases the speaker asserts for Himself omniscience as His peculiar attribute. In accordance with this, John tells us that "Jesus did not commit Himself to them (*i.e.* the persons mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 132.

the preceding context, who pretended to be convinced by His miracles), because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify to Him of man; for He knew what was in man" (John ii. 24, 25). Here is ascribed to Jesus Christ a knowledge which surpasses that of any creature. He knew what was *in* man, the internal, unexpressed thoughts and feelings of men, that of which no outward sign gave any indication; and this He knew not by communication from another, as a prophet might by revelation from God, but of Himself (*αὐτός*); nor was this intelligence limited to individuals, it extended to all men; He knew what was in man, in man universally, in any man, and in every man. So also Simon Peter on a memorable occasion, in answer to our Lord's question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" exclaimed, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee," — a plain acknowledgment of his Master's omniscience, which our Lord, by not repudiating, implicitly authenticates. It will not do to say that the phrase to "know all things" is merely a strong way of expressing the possession of extensive knowledge; for the apostle's argument plainly is, "Lord, Thou knowest *this* thing, because Thou knowest *every* thing;" and further, as it was of the state of his feeling towards Christ that Peter spoke, it was only on the assumption that the knowledge of Christ extended to an acquaintance with the secrets of the heart that his appeal to Christ's knowledge had any meaning. If he did not mean to say, "Lord, Thy knowledge is universal, nothing, not even the secrets of men's hearts, is unknown to Thee, and therefore Thou knowest that I love Thee," his argument was fallacious, and his appeal nugatory.

#### iv. DIVINE WORSHIP.

As our Lord thus allowed His disciples to ascribe to Him divine attributes, so He also allowed them to offer to Him divine honours. I do not adduce cases in which it is said that persons worshipped our Lord, because the word worship includes all sorts of homage, from acts of simple respectful courtesy up to acts of reverent devotion, such as can be with propriety offered only to God; and we have no means of determining, in most cases, what kind and degree of homage

was offered to our Lord by those who are said to have worshipped Him. At the same time, in some of these instances there is, as Dr. Wardlaw has observed, "so strong a resemblance, so very near an approach, to divine worship, that we should have expected a creature, . . . tenderly alive to a sense of his infinite inferiority, and jealous of the glory of God that sent him, to have said on such occasions, as the Apostle Peter did to Cornelius, 'Stand up, I myself also am a man;' or as the angel to John when he fell at his feet to worship him, 'See thou do it not—worship God.' Nothing of this kind, however, is to be found in the life of Christ as recorded by the evangelists. He accepts all the homage that is offered Him without a hint of its impropriety, or the slightest monitory intimation of His equality in nature with the persons by whom it is paid."<sup>1</sup>

But if we may not lay stress on these acts of homage offered to our Lord when on earth, it is otherwise with those cases in which divine worship is either obviously offered to Jesus Christ, or authorized as offered to Him in His exalted state. We find, for instance, the apostle Paul saying that when he was afflicted with the thorn in the flesh he "besought the Lord thrice" that it might depart from him; and that it is Christ to whom he thus prayed is rendered certain by what he adds: "And He," *i.e.* the Lord to whom he prayed, "said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength (*δύναμις*) is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the strength (*δύναμις*) of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9). It does not admit of a doubt that He who gave the assurance to the apostle in answer to his prayer was the Lord to whom the apostle prayed; and that this was the Lord Jesus Christ the apostle's joyful exclamation at the close of the passage makes equally certain.

When St. Paul offered this prayer he may have thought of a scene he had himself witnessed at an earlier period, while he was yet an unbeliever in Christ. As the multitude were stoning Stephen in his presence, and in a sense under his authority, the sufferer, who with eyes uplifted to heaven had seen the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand

<sup>1</sup> *Socinian Controversy*, p. 164.

of God, invoked Him, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep" (Acts vii. 59, 60). Here was an act of worship offered to Christ of a kind the most solemn that can be conceived. A dying man commends his soul to Christ and beseeches Him to receive it, and at the same time implores forgiveness for his murderers. Could such a prayer be offered to a creature? Would any sane man offer such a prayer to any one whom he did not believe to be truly God, by whom alone the spirit can be received after death, and who alone can forgive sins?

Stephen is described as invoking or calling upon (*ἐπικαλούμενος*). In the A. V. the word "God" is supplied: "Calling upon God;" but this is quite unauthorized, and it is obviously improper, for the object of Stephen's invocation was the Being whom he addressed, and that was the Lord Jesus. In thus invoking Christ the protomartyr exhibited what is in the N. T. presented as a distinguishing and characteristic mark of the Christians. They are specially described as those who call upon the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. When Ananias was commanded by the Lord to go to Saul after the vision on the road to Damascus, he sought to excuse himself by pleading that he had "heard how much evil this man had done to the saints, and how he had authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name," *i.e.* the name of Christ; where the term "saints" and the phrase "that call on Thy name" are alike descriptive of the Christians as such. So Ananias, when at length he went to Saul, summoned him thus, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," *i.e.* performing the distinctively Christian act by praying to Jesus as Lord. In full accordance with this is the language of the apostle in addressing his letter to the Church at Corinth: "To the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. i. 2), *i.e.* all true Christians wherever they may be. Nothing, then, can be more certain than that to worship Christ and to pray to Him were distinctively characteristic of the primi-



tive Christians, and were acts authorized and commended to them by those who were their teachers sent by Christ Himself.

Instances also occur in the writings of the apostles in which Jesus Christ is associated with God the Father as the object of prayer. "Now God Himself, even our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you," says St. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iii. 11); and again, in his Second Epistle to the same Church (ii. 16, 17), he exclaims: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." So also in such utterances as, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you;" "Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour;" "Grace and peace be unto you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,"—utterances which are found in almost the same form in nearly all Paul's Epistles,—we have prayers for spiritual blessings addressed to Jesus Christ, and for the most part to Him along with God the Father. Can it be supposed for a moment that any creature, however exalted, would thus be associated with the Almighty as the object of prayer, and not only associated with Him, but sometimes, in the order of address, put before Him?

As little can we suppose that an inspired teacher would put down in writing those doxologies and ascriptions of praise to Christ which we find in the N. T., were he not regarded by the writer as Divine. "To whom," exclaims Paul, after naming Jesus Christ, "be glory for ever and ever. Amen." "Grow in grace," says Peter, "and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen." "Unto Him that loved us," says John, "and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Such expressions of adoration and praise are identical with those elsewhere in Scripture addressed to God. Can we doubt that the apostles, in addressing them to Jesus Christ, did so in the full belief that He is truly God? And when we come to that grand vision of the celestial glory which John saw when

heaven was opened to him, and he heard its worship, and learn how there angelic choirs and the hosts of the redeemed join in saying in a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. v. 11), it can only be the blindness of prejudice which prevents any one from seeing that the Being who is thus represented as receiving such lofty homage, such boundless praise, from the highest and holiest creatures, as the object of the sublime worship of heaven, must be nothing less than in the highest sense Divine.<sup>1</sup>

In this vision of the heavenly glory John saw the angels joining with the redeemed from amongst men—represented by the four and twenty elders—in worshipping Christ. In other parts of Scripture angels are represented as worshipping the God-man. When God brought His Son into the world He said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. i. 6); and when He had finished His work on earth, when He had by Himself purged our sins by His blood, and had been exalted to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, far above all principality and power, He had a name given to Him "which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11). Such confession on the bended knee is an act of solemn adoration and worship. Here angels and men meet in one common service, and their adoring hymn of praise is re-echoed through creation. "And every creature," says St. John, "which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." "Can we," asks Dr. Wardlaw, "after reading such a passage as this, retain a doubt whether the Being who is thus represented as receiving the very same expressions of

<sup>1</sup> "You may in vain endeavour," says Canon Liddon, "satisfactorily to solve the questions which encompass such points as the number of the beast or the era of the millennium; but you cannot for one moment doubt who is meant by 'the Lamb,' or what is the character of the worship that is so solemnly offered to Him," *Bampton Lecture*, p. 375, 2nd ed.

adoration and praise with the Eternal Jehovah—of unqualified adoration, of everlasting praise—be Himself more than a creature?" Surely, as the same writer elsewhere says, "He cannot be a creature whom all creatures adore."

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### (III.) DIVINE WORKS ASCRIBED TO JESUS CHRIST.

We now proceed to consider the works which are in the N. T. ascribed to Jesus Christ as peculiar to Him and characteristic of Him.

##### i. CREATION.

(i.) In the O. T., as we have seen, the Messiah appears under widely differing aspects—sometimes as a sufferer, enduring meekly and patiently the severest afflictions, which He has done nothing personally to merit; sometimes exercising the greatest power and authority, which is represented as His rightful property; and sometimes dispensing the most benignant influences, by which men are blessed in Him. Entirely accordant with this is the view given in the N. T. of Jesus Christ, whom we at one time see subjected to privations, engaged in almost servile labour, and exposed to reproach, indignity, and suffering; at another represented as doing the greatest works by His own power, and sustaining dignities which no created being could be rendered capable of sustaining.

Of the former class of passages it may suffice to mention His subjection to His parents, in connection with the whole scene narrated by Luke (ii. 41–52); His temptation of the devil, as recorded by Matthew (iv. 1–11); His working as a τέκτων, or artificer; His going about as a teacher and a preacher of the kingdom of God; His submission to the insults and injuries of His enemies; and His death. All of these are works (including under that term all that is the result of voluntary agency) which indicate a nature in essence the same as our own.

The other class of passages will require a more careful examination and a fuller elucidation.

The first we mention is John i. 3: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." With this we may take ver. 10, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him." It is of importance to remark in the outset that the verb used in these verses, and translated "was" or "were made," is the same in both; so that if any alteration is proposed in the translation of it, justice requires that the same alteration should be made on both verses; and further, if any proposed alteration will not suit both verses so as to make sense, it must be rejected as not a just translation. Keeping this in view we may, as a mere matter of philology, set aside at once the Socinian renderings of the verb in these passages. In the former passage they render *ἐγένετο, donc*: "All things were done by Him; and without Him was not anything done that was done." But this will not suit the second passage, for we cannot say, "The world was done by Him." Feeling this they translate *ἐγένετο* here "enlightened," supplying the word *πεφωτισμένος* from the preceding verse to eke out this meaning. But whilst, on the one hand, this artifice is utterly inadmissible, and that on two grounds, 1. because it is incredible that any writer meaning to ascribe a particular action to a person of whom he wrote should leave the very word by which alone that action would be expressed to be *understood* by the reader, and 2. because it supposes a construction which is not admissible, *ἐγένετο πεφωτισμένος* not being Greek; so, on the other hand, it destroys the parallelism between the two passages, and for this reason, were there nothing else against it, must be rejected. The only allowable meaning of *ἐγένετο* which will suit both places is that which our translators have given, and this of itself is a strong reason in its favour. But it is objected by Unitarians that the verb *γίνομαι* never signifies to create or bring something out of nothing, and that consequently to give it such a meaning here is illegitimate. To this it is enough to reply that we do not give it such a meaning here; we simply affirm to it the meaning which properly belongs to it, viz. that of becoming or coming into existence either

absolutely or in some particular state. That this is its proper meaning, and that this, in some of its modifications, will suit all the usages of the word, is ruled by the universal consent of all the proper authorities on such a question. Now, that which comes into existence through the agency of another being is beyond all question *produced* by that being, and hence though *γίνομαι* never signifies "I create," it may be so used as to be equivalent to "I am created." When, therefore, it is said here *τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο*, though the strict rendering of these words taken by themselves is "All things came into being," yet when *δι' αὐτοῦ* is added we may lawfully render them "all things were made or produced by Him," inasmuch as the words, "All things came into being through Him," mean as much as this, and can mean nothing less.

The comparison of these two verses enables us at once to dispose of another Socinian gloss by which ver. 3 is made to affirm merely that the Logos made all moral excellences and virtues; for even granting that this *might* be the meaning of ver. 3, yet the comparison with *κόσμος*, which can have no such meaning, shows that it is inadmissible here.

But supposing these philological difficulties overcome, let us ask what meaning would the Socinian substitute for what is the plain and natural meaning of the passage as it stands? To this the reply is, that the reference here is to the new or Christian dispensation, and that the assertion is that all things done in it were done by Christ—that He is the author of all the moral excellences and privileges that are to be enjoyed there. To this it may suffice to reply—1. That the supposition of an allusion here to the new dispensation is altogether gratuitous. There is nothing in the context to lead to such a supposition or to justify it. John is evidently speaking of what happened anterior to all dispensations, and it would be quite irrelevant in the midst of this to introduce a remark as to the agency of the Logos in the latest of these. 2. The phrase *τὰ πάντα*, when used thus absolutely, invariably means the universe or entire system of things; compare 1 Cor. viii. 6, "There is to us one God, the Father, of whom are *τὰ πάντα*," etc.; Col. i. 16, "For by Him were all things (*τὰ πάντα*) created, both things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible," etc. 3. This interpretation

entirely disturbs the connection between this 3rd verse and ver. 2, or renders it of no force. In the latter we read, "The same was in the beginning with God," and then the writer goes on to say, "All things," etc. The natural inference from the juxtaposition of these verses is that the one states the time at which the events specified in the other took place; it was in the beginning, when the Logos was with God, that He made all things. This is intelligible and important, if by the making of all things be meant the creation of the universe; but what does it mean if by that is intended the setting in order of the Gospel dispensation? Does "the beginning" here mean the beginning of that dispensation? If so, in what sense was Christ then with God? or how can it be said that He performed all things connected with that dispensation in the beginning of it, seeing it is His agency that carries on that dispensation to the end of time? If, on the other hand, by "beginning" here we understand the commencement of created existence, how can Jesus Christ as a mere man be said to have been then with God? or in what sense did He then do all things that are done in that dispensation? On neither supposition can it be shown that the statement of the evangelist is intelligible on the Socinian interpretation of ver. 3.

I deem it quite unnecessary to dwell on the attempt of some Unitarians to render their passage thus, "All things are done or made for His sake." In offering this translation they go in the face of one of the most clearly ascertained canons as to the usage and force of the preposition *διά*. The unanimous consent of all grammarians and lexicographers is that *διά* with the genitive never signifies "on account of" or "for the sake of;" but invariably "by means of." We may therefore say that such a rendering as that proposed here by Unitarians is simply impossible; the words do not admit of it.

We conclude, then, that this passage ascribes the creation of all things to the Logos or Word, the same which became incarnate in the person of Jesus Himself. In other passages of the N. T. the same truth is taught, if possible still more explicitly. Thus in Col. i. 16, 17, it is said, "For by Him are all things created, those which are in the heavens and those which are upon the earth, things visible and things

invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also cites in reference to Jesus Christ a passage from the O. T. relating to the creative power of the Most High: "And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and of Thy years there is no end." In the former of these passages creation, the creation of all things, is ascribed to Jesus Christ, and that by the use of the verb which properly designates this act, *κτίζω*; He is specially described as the Creator of all intelligent and moral beings, however dignified their condition and however honourable their place in God's universe; and He is represented as the Proprietor and Sustainer of all the things He has framed. So distinct and unequivocal a testimony to the fact of our Lord's being the Creator of the universe ought for ever to settle that point with all who profess to take the Bible as their rule of faith. Unitarians, however, attempt to wrest this as they do also the other Scriptures so as to destroy its testimony in favour of Christ's divine power. They resort here also to their favourite expedient of referring such passages to the new order of things introduced by Christ as the head of the Christian dispensation; they translate *ἐκτίσθη*, "arranged" or "ordered;" and they understand the whole of Christ's mediatorial power and authority. But on this supposition what are we to make of the various orders of beings here enumerated? Were they all set in order or arranged by Christ in virtue of His mediatorial power? Were angels in heaven and those lofty intelligences here designated thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, formed into new orders, or placed in new positions by Christ after He ascended to His throne? And if so, what has all this to do with Paul's design in this passage, which is obviously to assign a reason (*ὅτι*) for his preceding statement that Jesus Christ was the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation? Understand him here of the creation of all things, and the

connection of his statement is clear enough, "He is first-born of all creation, for by Him all things were created; and He is the image of God, for as Creator He shines out in the brightness of His Father's glory."<sup>1</sup> But if by the creation here spoken of be intended the "arrangement" effected by Christ as Mediator, it is difficult to say how the latter statement contains any reason illustrative or confirmatory of the former. To meet these difficulties and objections an expedient has been resorted to so extravagant as to show, on the one hand, the desperate extremity of those who resort to it; on the other, the unscrupulous eagerness with which Unitarians will resort to any hypothesis, however forced and incredible, rather than admit the plain testimony of Scripture in favour of the divine power of Christ. They say that by "thrones," etc., here are to be understood certain fictitious beings who were supposed by the Jews to preside over kingdoms; and that by Christ's creating them is to be understood the mighty revolutions He was to effect among the nations they were supposed to preside over. According to this interpretation, then, the apostle, meaning only to say that Christ was the image of God inasmuch as He produced a mighty revolution among the kingdoms of the earth, chooses to intimate this by saying that Christ created powers that never existed at all except in the fantastic fictions of Oriental theosophy. Can any one seriously believe this? If so, what must he think of Paul as a writer or a teacher?

Such violent expedients to mystify a very plain passage refute themselves. The testimony of the apostle is plain and unequivocal. Whether τὰ πάντα be taken in its wide sense as denoting "the totality of creation,"<sup>2</sup> or in the more restricted sense for which Dr. Pye Smith argues, as referring only to the intelligent and moral part of creation, the statement of Paul can be accepted for nothing less than an explicit assertion of the creating power of Christ—a power by which He evinced His supremacy to all creation, and showed Himself the image of the invisible God. In this sense all the ancient Greek fathers, who should best have known the force of words in their own tongue, understood the passage.

With respect to the passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews,

<sup>1</sup> Eadie, *in loco*.

<sup>2</sup> Winer's *Grammar*, p. 128, Eng. Tr.



there can be no doubt that the writer of that Epistle meant to apply to Jesus Christ the language which he there cites from Ps. cii.; and if so, he offers a most indubitable testimony to His power as Creator. He not only applied to Him a passage which celebrates the praises of God as the Creator, but the wording of that passage is such as to exclude the usual subterfuge of Unitarians by specifying the heavens and the earth as the objects on which His creative power was exercised. Precluded by this from suggesting their favourite hypothesis of a moral creation as effected by Christ through His religion, they have no expedient but to deny the accuracy of the writer in applying his quotations to the Son. They thus pass over to the ground of the infidel; for if it be insinuated that the writer of this part of Scripture has erred in so important and essential a part of his argument as this, the divine authority of his writing is virtually impugned, and all weight is taken from his statements as decisive of what is revealed truth. With those who take this ground it is obvious that we can have no further argument whilst engaged in an investigation which presupposes the divine authority of the canonical Scriptures.

(ii.) On the ground of these and other parallel testimonies, then, we hold it to be a part of the truth revealed to us by God in the Bible that the Lord Jesus Christ created the universe. Let us now ask what light this fact casts on the question as to His higher nature? And here it is obvious to remark,—

1. That such a fact plainly implies His pre-existence. This is so obvious as to need no illustration. If Jesus Christ created the universe, then undoubtedly He existed not only before He was born of the Virgin Mary, but before any part of the existing universe was in being. This extends His pre-existence to a period so remote as to surpass our powers of calculation, and to seem to us virtually an eternity.

2. It seems fair to argue that if He was with God in the beginning, and if by Him all things were made or created, He Himself must possess an uncreated being. If in the beginning He was, *i.e.* already existed, then He must have existed before the beginning; and if He existed before the beginning of creation, He must Himself be uncreated, otherwise creation must have begun with Him, which would be a contradiction in terms. We reach the same result by reason-

ing from the other fact in this statement, viz. that the Son created all things. For either He Himself is included in the "all things" or He is not: if He is, then He must have created Himself, which is absurd; if He is not, then His must be an uncreated nature.

3. The ascription to Him of creative power is of itself an assertion of His Deity. For to create is what God alone can do. We have no more precise and definite view of God than is supplied us by this, that He is the Creator of all things. Hence we have our most impressive convictions of His Being and Godhead—of His infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. It would seem to disturb the simplest elements of reason if we were to maintain that a Being could create in the proper sense of that term and yet not be God.

But it has been asked, May not God create mediately as well as immediately; and is not what the Scripture ascribes to Jesus Christ, not the fruit and immediate creation, which properly belongs to God, but only that subordinate and instrumental creation which as God's servant and delegate He accomplished? This is the Arian hypothesis, which, admitting the pre-existence of Christ and His superiority to all other creatures, yet holds Him to be originally but a creature, though of so exalted a kind that Jehovah associated Him with Himself, and employed Him as His delegate in creating the world. The reasonings already offered touching the pre-existence of Christ and His being represented as the Creator of all things may partly suffice to show the futility of this hypothesis; but as it admits of a more copious refutation, it may be proper to enter a little more particularly into the subject.

In attempting to base this hypothesis on Scripture, the main proof on which its advocates rely is the use of the preposition *διὰ* in the passages which relate to the creation of the world by Jesus Christ. This particle, they argue, when used in reference to agency denotes invariably, not the primary, but the mediate or instrumental agency. Hence, say they, as the Scripture only affirms that the world was made by means or through Jesus Christ, the only legitimate meaning we can put on the statement is that the Father employed the Son as His subordinate, and delegated to Him that power by which He was able to create the universe; and this the more

especially that it is expressly said that by or through Him God made the world. On this I remark,—

(1.) That it is not true that Scripture always uses the preposition *διὰ* when speaking of Christ's agency in creation. In one of the passages already considered by us, that from Col. i. 16, the preposition used is *ἐν*, and that in connection with the verb *ἐκτίσθη*. The force of this is to indicate that the Son not only created, but originated the creation; it was in Him as the building is in the architect; it was His divine plan and conception, as well as His work. No words can more explicitly ascribe to Christ primary as distinguished from instrumental agency in this matter.

(2.) Though the word usually employed to express the agency of the Son in creation is *διὰ*, it does not follow, even from this, that His agency was merely instrumental, for *διὰ* is sometimes used to express primary as well as instrumental agency. Of this instances may be adduced from both classical and Biblical sources, and it is now generally admitted by grammarians and lexicographers.<sup>1</sup> So far, then, as the mere use of this word is concerned nothing is determined. *διὰ Χριστοῦ* or *υἱοῦ* may mean either that Christ was the primary or that He was the instrumental agent in creation.

(3.) We must therefore inquire whether there be anything in the nature of the case that shall determine for us the point which philology leaves thus open. And here it is obvious to remark that the nature of the case is such as to include entirely the idea of delegation or mere instrumentality. A privilege, or office, or duty may be delegated, but natural power cannot be delegated; that must inhere in the party if he is to perform the work entrusted to him, or it must be specially communicated to him by God. But there are certain powers which cannot be communicated—powers which even God cannot communicate; and of these the power of creating

<sup>1</sup> “As to the distinction between *δι’ αὐτοῦ* and *ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ*, *per quam* and *ex quo*, or the like, it can be of very little service to your cause. The preposition *διὰ* with a genitive after it is frequently used, as well in Scripture as in ecclesiastical writers, to express the *efficient* cause, as much as *ὑπέρ*, *ἐκ*, or *πρός*, or any other. So that the argument drawn from the use of the prepositions is very poor and trifling, as was long since observed by Basil the Great, who very handsomely exposes its author and inventor, Aëtius, for it.” Waterland, *Defence of some Queries*, etc., p. 185.

is one. That is a faculty inherent in God, and which does not admit of being communicated to another. He who possesses it must have it by inherent and essential right, *i.e.* he must be God. As, then, Jesus Christ did create the universe, and as the faculty of creating is one essentially belonging to God and incommunicable to a creature, it matters not by what phraseology the fact may be stated; the nature of the case determines His act to be that of God.

From such reasonings as these some very respectable theologians, and among the rest Dr. Hill, have shrunk as presumptuous. "It appears to me," says Hill, "upon all occasions most unbecoming and presumptuous for us to say what God can do and what He cannot do." Now, that we may transgress in this way is undoubtedly true, and it may be accepted as a wise caution that we should be very careful of the ground we assume in making such assertions. But that there is no case in which we may confidently affirm that a given work is such as God alone can perform, is surely to assert what is utterly extravagant and untenable. In that case we could never with certainty argue the divine existence and attributes from the works of nature, for to all such arguments it might be replied on this ground, "It is not for us to say that none but God could do such things." This objection, like many others of a similar nature, whilst seeming to reverence the Divine Majesty, in reality strikes at the root of all reverence and all religion. And it is as unreasonable as it is mischievous. There are surely some divine acts that are peculiar to God, some things that He alone can do, and some powers which He cannot communicate to His creatures. Were it not so, there would be nothing *essentially* to differentiate God from His creatures; and it would be possible to conceive of a creature gradually growing into God by the successive communication to him of divine powers. From this frightful absurdity we can guard ourselves only by maintaining what Dr. Hill has denied, that there are some things which, without presumption and in the most devout and reverent spirit, we may say God cannot do.

Now, among these things we place the communicating to a creature of the power of creation. If this be possible, then, as Dr. Priestley has himself admitted, there is no other attribute

and power of God which may not be communicated ; so that even a created God would cease to be a contradiction. But, argues Dr. Hill, "we see that in the ordinary course of Providence He withdraws Himself, and employs the ministry of other beings, and we believe that at the first appearance of the gospel men were enabled by the divine power residing in them to perform miracles, *i.e.* such works as man cannot do," etc. One cannot help expressing surprise that a man like Dr. Hill should have allowed himself to write anything like this. He has displayed as gross an instance of what logicians call *ignoratio elenchi* as one need wish to see. It is no doubt true that God is often pleased to employ His creatures as the agents and instruments of His will ; but because God employs a creature to do what his natural faculties or opportunities fit him for doing, are we to be shut out from saying that God cannot employ a creature to do what no creature possesses the faculty of doing ? Or shall we say that because God may employ a creature to do something within the reach of a creature to accomplish, therefore He can convey to a creature the power of doing what none but God Himself can do ? Then, as respects miracles, we may ask Dr. Hill how he discovered that the divine power by which the apostles wrought these "resided in them" ? This is assumed, not only gratuitously, but in the face of the express statements of the apostles themselves, that it was not they, but God, who wrought the miracle. All that the apostles did was simply to obey the divine impulse which told them that God would exert His divine power in a particular case and way. Beyond this they had no power ; the power was not of man, but of God ; it was not because divine power was lodged in them that they did these wonderful works ; it was, as Nicodemus rightly judged, because God was "with them ;" or, as the historian of the apostles expresses it, because "God gave testimony to the word of His grace," etc. Miracles, then, afford no proof whatever that a divine power can be communicated to a creature, and to compare Christ's creating energy to the agency of the apostles in miracles is virtually to deny it altogether ; in that case the whole of His share in creation was the mere utterance of the fiat that intimated the forthputting of a power which He could neither use nor command.

Whilst, however, the conclusion at which we have arrived appears perfectly sound, it seems necessary to remark that it hardly embraces the whole case. It must be admitted as worthy of notice that, whilst the sacred writers all but universally use the word *διά* to express the agency of the Son in creation, they never employ the preposition *ὑπό*, the preposition properly expressive of direct and primary agency. This is a fact which it behoves us not to overlook. Such a constant usage means something, and it concerns us to discover what it means. That it does not mean what the Arians imputed to it our previous remarks have shown. But there is a mode of stating the doctrine on this subject used by some of the Christian Fathers which seems to meet the peculiarity just referred to, and which is quite in accordance with Trinitarian theology. These Fathers distinguished between what they call the *ἐξουσία αὐθεντική* of the Father and the *ἐξουσία τῶν ἰδίων δημιουργημάτων*, by which they intended the distinction between the absolute power of God and the power exercised by the Son in His mediatorial capacity. Now, it was in this capacity that He created the world; so that the original source of creation was the Father as representing the One Godhead. The agent in it was the Son as Mediator. It is thus true that God created the universe through the Son, and yet it does not follow that the Son possessed any inferior power, or put forth less than a divine energy in that matter. "The Father having willed that all things should be made, the Son formed all things by the command of the Father; that so the command might preserve the original power to the Father; and the Son, on the other hand, might have the power of His own administrations; so that neither should the Father be estranged from the mastership of His own works, nor the Son reign over what had been wrought by another, but over what had been by Himself." Cyrill, *Catechism*, i. 11.

Besides the work of creation, Scripture ascribes to Jesus Christ the

## ii. SUSTENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK OF CREATED BEING.

In Col. i. 17 it is said of Him, "And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." The word translated

here "consist" is *συνέστηκε*. It is part of a verb which properly signifies "to stand together with," or "to make to stand together with," and is hence used in reference to the constitution of things, both to express the original creation of these, and to express the continued conservation of them. By some the former sense is given to this passage; but taken in connection with what precedes, the latter seems the preferable. Jesus Christ, as the Creator of all things,—the Being in, through, and for whom all creation has been formed,—has been set before us in the preceding verse. It was not needful, therefore, to repeat here that He had constituted all things. But as He might have constituted them without continuing to uphold them, there is a propriety in the apostle's adding here that by Him all things are sustained. The passage so taken may be illustrated by a passage of the pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo*, c. 6: "*ἐκ Θεοῦ τὰ πάντα καὶ διὰ Θεοῦ συνέστηκε*—Of God are all things, and by God they consist, or are sustained." So Paul here says that all things are made by Christ, and that all things continue to be kept by Him in their proper place, order, and utility. It is worthy of notice that Paul here again uses the preposition *ἐν*, "in Him all things consist." The force of this is thus given by Olshausen: "*ἐν* refers to the *present* sustentation of the world, which is ever in the Son, inasmuch as He upholds and sustains the world by His word (Heb. i. 3), and as the sustentation may be regarded as a continuous creation." The passage here referred to by Olshausen from the Epistle to the Hebrews affords another proof of the fact that the world is sustained by Christ. The whole passage runs thus: "Who being the radiance or effulgence of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." That the person here spoken of is our Lord Jesus Christ there can be no room for question; and that it is He who is said to uphold all things by the word of His power, will appear evident to all impartial readers, more especially those who consult the original, where the word for "his" is the one properly meaning "his own" (not *αὐτοῦ* but *αὐτοῦ*), so that the proper rendering of the passage is, "upholding all things



by the word of His own power." To all such, therefore, the attempt of Belsham to make the apostle say that the power by which Jesus Christ upheld all things was not His own but God's, changing the text from αὐτοῦ to αὐτοῦ, and making the antecedent to this the remote Θεός rather than the proximate ὁς, will appear in its true character, and be treated by them with the contempt it deserves.

Understood of Jesus Christ, this verse ascribes to Him the upholding of all things by the word of His power. The expressive words, "of His power" (ἡγία τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ), may be understood here as if the genitive had the force of an adjective—"His powerful word." By this He upholds all things. The word rendered "upholding" (φέρων) is from a verb which signifies "to bear," "to carry," "to sustain." It conveys the idea of one taking up something and carrying it. In the passage before us it could not be better translated than it is in the Authorized Version.

The explicit testimony of these two passages, both of which beyond all doubt refer to the physical creation, is sufficient to justify us in ascribing to Christ the sustentation of the universe. How vast is the work thus ascribed to Him! What boundless knowledge, what exhaustless resources, what ceaseless care, what prodigious power must be in the possession of the Being who is entrusted with the safety of the universe, and on whom the whole enormous fabric rests! For such an office, attributes and resources not less than those demanded for creation are requisite. And, in truth, the upholding of all things is, as Olshausen justly remarks, "a continuous creation." A derived being is necessarily a dependent being. That which was not self-existent at first never can become self-existent merely by continuing to exist. Brought into being by another, it remains dependent on the power of that other for the continuance of its being; and if he were to let it go, it would instantly relapse into its original nonentity. The preservation of creation is therefore virtually a continual repetition of the original act of creation. It is fit, therefore, that it should be in the hands of Him by whom originally all things were made. Hence Scripture teaches us to ascribe to God the preservation as we ascribe to Him the creation of all



things. "Lord, Thou preservest man and beast" (Ps. xxxvi. 6). "Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to Thine ordinances: for all are Thy servants" (Ps. cxix. 90, 91). "Thou, even Thou, art Jehovah alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee" (Neh. ix. 6). In these passages the government and the preservation of creation are set forth as peculiar works of Jehovah, such as He alone is competent to perform, and such as draw towards Him the adoration and praise of the whole host of heaven. But in the verses we have been considering it is to the Son, to Jesus Christ, that this work is ascribed. In Him the universe holds together, and by Him it is held up; and that not through any vast and complicated agency, but simply by the word of His power—that same word which He uttered when He spoke creation into being, and gave order and harmony to the vast system of things. Here all is in perfect keeping. Christ the Creator,—Christ the Sustainer of all things. To Him, therefore, must we yield the honours due only to God. We must reverence Him as alone Jehovah, and adore Him as Lord of all.

### iii. GOVERNMENT AND JUDGMENT.

This work is distinctly asserted by Christ Himself as belonging to Him. "All power," said He, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. . . . He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man" (John v. 22, 27). "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Then shall He say also to them

on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into everlasting life" (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

To these statements others found in different parts of Scripture correspond. In the O. T. the Messiah is continually represented as the Great, the Righteous, the Universal, the eternal Ruler: the government is upon His shoulder; His throne is for ever and ever; and of His dominion there shall be no end or limit. In the N. T. His apostles speak on this subject thus: "He is Lord of all" (Acts x. 36); "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom. xiv. 9); "God hath raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 20-23). The same thing is implied in His sitting at the right hand of God, as intimated in such passages as the following: "God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11); "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25). And with reference to Jesus Christ as the final Judge of all, His apostles are equally explicit: "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31); "He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and dead" (Acts x. 42); "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ" (Rom. xiv. 10); "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 1).

These testimonies are sufficiently clear and explicit; and if they are to be taken literally,—if what they state concerning Jesus Christ is to be taken as an actual fact,—then, beyond all doubt or question, He is to be viewed as now occupying the throne of heaven, as exercising universal empire, as Proprietor and Ruler of all things, as holding in His hand the fate of nations and the destiny of individuals, and as about to appear before an assembled universe as the Judge of all—the living and the dead. Now, acts like these are necessarily the acts of a Divine Being. They imply omniscient providence, omnipotent control, and independent sovereignty. Nothing less will suffice for the government of the universe and the righteous judgment of intelligent creatures. Socinians, it is true, speak here, as in instances already noted by us, of delegated powers and authority. But such talk is as vain in the case before us as in the others we have considered. Some of the passages quoted, it is admitted, speak of God's having *given* to Christ the government of the universe, and of His having ordained Him to be Judge of all; but these passages receive their sufficient explanation from a reference to the mediatorial character of the Redeemer and His official relation thence arising to the Father. They predicate nothing as to His *personal* qualities, nor could this be without gross absurdity supposed. The nature of the case is, again, such as to preclude the supposition of a delegated or conferred personal fitness for the office: omniscience cannot be communicated; omnipotence cannot be transferred; and a communicated independent sovereignty is a contradiction in terms. The very fact that God has appointed Jesus Christ in His mediatorial capacity to such high offices implies that *essentially*, and apart altogether from any economical or mediatorial arrangement, He possesses power to occupy Jehovah's throne and exercise the functions of the Infinite and Eternal.

Equally vain is the cavil of some of the Unitarians, drawn from the fact that, after all, the universe is limited, and the number of beings to be judged at the last day is also limited,

and that consequently we are not entitled from that to argue the infinitude of Christ's knowledge or power; for if an objection of this sort were valid, it would be impossible for us to show evidence of any of the divine attributes from the divine doings, seeing all the manifestations of the divine agency within the sphere of the actual are and must be limited. Besides, this is not a question of degree, but of kind. Finite power does not become infinite simply by multiplying the number of objects on which it is exercised, any more than finite knowledge becomes omniscience simply by multiplying the number of objects it embraces. There is a kind of power and a kind of knowledge to which we irresistibly attach the quality of divine, however limited the range in point of number of the objects on which it is exerted. The power which creates an insect is as truly divine as the power which creates an angel. The knowledge which can embrace the secrets of all hearts, and provide for the interests of all beings, and administer unerring judgment on the complicated moral agencies of all intelligences belonging to one world, is as much divine as the knowledge which should do the same for an infinitude of worlds. In fact, to talk of degrees in such matters is simply absurd, for the simple conception of the divine is that it admits of no degrees; and unless this be kept strictly in view, it will be impossible not only to prove the Deity of Christ, but to furnish any proof of a Deity at all.

All this proceeds on the assumption that these passages are to be understood literally. To this, however, some Unitarians object. These descriptions, they say, of the sovereignty of Christ refer merely to the prevalence of His religion in the world, and the references to Him as Judge of all are mere figurative intimations that His doctrine is to form the rule or standard of judgment at last. It is difficult to believe that any man can seriously accept this interpretation of these passages. If such statements as have been quoted are to be treated as mere figures, what, we may ask, are to be accepted as realities? If Christ's rule and government, if the judgment of the world by Him are mere figures, what security have we for the reality of that heaven which He has gone to

prepare for us, or of that salvation which He has offered to secure? And if these representations are only figures, how strange are these figures! If Christ's sovereignty mean merely the influence of His truth in the hearts of men, what is meant by His reigning over all things in heaven above as well as in the earth beneath? what by "angels and principalities and powers" being subject to Him? what by every knee bowing to Him, every tongue confessing that He is Lord? And if, as we read, the time is coming when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, what is the sense of this, if by His kingdom be meant the influence of His religion on the minds of men? Is this some day to cease? And will the cessation of it be the consummation of the manifestation of God as the King of Heaven? This would land us in the absurdity of supposing that the entire economy of redemption had been instituted by God for the attainment of an end which could be attained only by the final cessation of that through which alone this redemption takes effect. We may venture to say that the common sense of men will indignantly reject all such manifest tricks and artifices of interpretation, the clear object of which is to force out of Scripture a seeming sanction to what Scripture most plainly does not teach.

It does not seem necessary to prosecute further this examination of passages bearing on the question of the Person of Christ. Only a portion of the evidence accruing from this source as to the true and proper Deity of our Lord has been adduced. But enough has been presented to show what is the general tenor of the teaching of Scripture on this subject. It is not too much to affirm that to this "all the prophets give witness," and this all the apostles of our Lord, as well as our Lord Himself, unequivocally affirm. In next lecture it will be my endeavour to present in a condensed form and connectedly this evidence in its argumentative force. We shall thus see on what a solid and irrefragable basis rests the belief of the Catholic Church in the true and proper Deity of Him whom she adores as her Founder and Head, and how Christians of all times may with heart and soul join in the

hymn with which the early Christians were wont each evening to worship Christ :—

“ Ἀξίος εἰ ἐν παντί καιρῷ  
ὑμνῶσθαι φωναῖς ὁσίων,  
Τῷ Θεῷ, ζῶντι ὁ διδούς.  
ὁ δὲ ὁ κόσμος σε δοξάζει.”<sup>1</sup>

“ Worthy art Thou at all times to be sung  
With undefiled tongue,  
Son of our God, Giver of Life, Alone !  
Therefore in all the world, Thy glories,  
Lord, they own.”<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### (IV.) GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Besides the evidence arising directly from the ascription throughout the Bible to Jesus Christ of the names, attributes, works, and worship appropriate to God, there are certain considerations of a general nature which may be adduced in corroboration of the conclusion to which that evidence leads—that Jesus Christ is truly and properly divine. These considerations are based on some of the statements of the sacred writers which have no *direct* or *immediate* bearing on our Lord's divine nature, but which seem tacitly and necessarily to imply that truth, inasmuch as it is only by assuming it that these statements can appear otherwise than absurd or extravagant.

In urging such considerations, it is assumed as a principle of common sense that no serious writer will voluntarily use language which he knows to be absurd, bombastical, or extravagant; that where any writer in whose sagacity and good sense we have confidence uses strong and vehement expressions, we are bound to ask whether there be nothing present at the time to the writer's mind, though not actually expressed by

<sup>1</sup> The whole hymn is given in Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacrae*, iii. 515.

<sup>2</sup> *Lyra Apostol.*, No. 63.

him, which led to or will justify the language he has used ; and that when we find from other parts of his writings he did hold and teach the doctrine which fully accounts for the language he has used, we cannot but believe that that doctrine was fully present to his mind at the time he wrote the statements referred to. The inference arising from this in relation to this doctrine itself is that it was one familiar to the mind of the writer, was held by him as of undoubted truth, was held by him as so generally acknowledged that to announce it was not necessary in the circumstances, and that at the same time it so underlay other matters of which he had occasion to write that it unconsciously moulded his language and regulated his sentiments in referring to them. As all *undesigned* indications of a truth are calculated to come with peculiar force upon the mind, we cannot but attach to these incidental implications of our Lord's Deity a special importance as proofs of that truth. The following particulars are offered in support and illustration of this position :—

i. The apostles invariably represent the *humanity* of our Lord as being in itself a marvellous thing. The simple facts that He should have been a man, that He should have been born, that He should have had a woman for His mother, that He should have grown in wisdom and stature, that He should have lived in circumstances of poverty and toil, that He should have been persecuted, and that He should have died, are all, in the judgment of His followers, so many marvels at which we cannot sufficiently wonder. With them it is not His Divine nature and perfections that are the objects of admiration ; it is His humanity at which they stand in amazement. Is this to be accounted for otherwise than on the supposition that they esteemed Him in original and proper nature as divine, and that what filled them with wonder was that He, the Divine, should condescend to become man ?

ii. The apostles represent the sending of Christ into the world as an act of unparalleled love on the part of God to man—as a costly expression of God's benevolence towards His creatures. Now in what respect did the mission of Christ so differ from the mission of any of the prophets which God had sent to His people as to be a proof of God's love such as they could not parallel, and as to cost Him (so to speak)

what they did not cost Him? Is there any way of accounting for this but by the supposition that Jesus Christ was not only dearer to God than any of the messengers He had sent, but dearer than any creature can be? that whilst they were but servants this was His Son, in a sense altogether peculiar, a sense involving a oneness of nature with God?

iii. The apostles always speak of Christ's coming into the world as an act of unexampled condescension and love on His part. Suppose Him a creature, what meaning can we attach to this? Where was the condescension implied in His being born, and coming to dwell as a man among His fellows? Who ever heard of a child condescending to be born? of a man showing unexampled love by coming to live on earth with other men? Either the language is absurd, or He of whom it is used was more than man.

iv. The apostles represent Christ's life on earth as a becoming poor on the part of Him who had been rich, as an emptying Himself of His glory, and such like expressions. Is there any sense in such representations if His pre-existence in a state of glory be not assumed?

v. The apostles uniformly give utterance to the strongest and warmest expressions of gratitude, admiration, and love when they speak of what they owe to their Master for His interposition on behalf of man. Much may be allowed to the enthusiasm of scholars in celebrating the praises of an honoured and beloved instructor; but the language in which the New Testament writers speak of Christ transcends all reasonable bounds, and becomes absolutely senseless, if not profane, if He was no more than a mere creature. We can account for such men indulging in such language only on the ground that, fully recognising His divinity, they felt that no language could be too strong to express the emotions of reverence, adoration, and gratitude with which the contemplations of His grace towards man inspired them.

vi. The sacred writers represent our Lord as speaking of the sublimest things with the ease and familiarity of one to whom such things were native. An apostle, brought to contemplate heavenly things, is prostrated and rendered speechless; Jesus speaks of heavenly things as one whose it is to dwell amongst them as His own—with the ease, simplicity,



and naturalness with which the native of a palace might speak of the splendours and majesty of a court. It is easy to see how this falls in with the hypothesis of His original Deity ; whilst, on the opposite hypothesis, it is, to say the least, singular, if not unaccountable.

vii. The striking religious solitude of Jesus Christ, as represented by the evangelists, is remarkable in connection with our present inquiry. He alone, of all God's servants, appears capable of sustaining His spiritual life by Himself. He is never found asking counsel of any one ; He never supplicates help from any one ; never asks any one to pray for Him ; never Himself unites in prayer with any one. Such solitarieness in one so gentle and loving and companionable is a strange thing, to be fully accounted for only by the fact that to Him belonged a nature which rendered religious companionship with mere mortals impossible.

viii. Jesus Christ is represented as claiming from His followers a homage, a devotion, and a love which no being but God is entitled to claim. To His claims those of parents, of brother and sister, of friend, of life itself, must yield. Who is He that asks such devotion, that asserts such supremacy as this ? If He is not God, His language in this case is inexcusable, and His pretensions immoral.

ix. As the birth of Jesus was supernatural, so His exaltation after His resurrection was such as no mere creature could have received. To pass into the heavens and in bodily form sit down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a partaker of the glory and authority of God, is an honour such as only a Divine Being in human nature was capable of receiving.

These considerations not only fall in with the assumption of our Lord's supreme divinity, but it is only on that assumption that all the statements and representations referred to can be reconciled with the sobriety and truthfulness of the sacred writers. When, in connection with this, it is remembered that such modes of speech and representations pervade the sacred writings ; that they proceed from men who were fully aware of the responsibility of the work in which they were engaged, and of the necessity of taking heed to every word they uttered in teaching their doctrines to men ; that such

language and such representations were calculated to frustrate one main end of their mission, if the being to whom they are applied was not divine, inasmuch as, whilst they were sent forth to denounce idolatry, they might lead men to offer divine honours to a creature; that though denouncing blasphemy as the most heinous of sins, they constantly attribute to their Master words and attributes which, if He is not divine, involve both them and Him in the guilt of blasphemy, and that the ascription to Jesus Christ of divine names, attributes, and honours is wholly their own act, the very idea having been originated by them, and resting wholly on their mode of speaking concerning Him, so that their uttering it is both a gratuitous and an unaccountable piece of folly or dishonesty on their part, if Jesus Christ was not wholly divine,—it seems to the last degree improbable that the sacred writers did not intend to teach that the Messiah was to be, and that Jesus, as the Christ, was a Divine Person in human nature. If Jesus Christ were a mere man, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that never was there a set of writers who more systematically or perseveringly used language calculated to deceive and mislead their readers, and that in a case where error is fatal, and to be misled is to be ruined.

It is reported of the great painter Fra Angelico that he never painted the head of the Saviour but on bended knee. It would be well if professed critics and theologians studied the revelation of Him in the Bible in a like reverent spirit. It is only thus that the Divine can be really apprehended and appreciated. When men approach the Divine without reverence they are sure to misread the signs, to become vain in their imaginations, and amid the mists of their own foolish and darkened minds to substitute for the truth of God a poor, contracted, and erroneous conception of their own.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

## II. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

We have seen how distinctly and with what abundant evidence Scripture asserts the true and proper Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. It no less distinctly, though with less copiousness of iteration, asserts His true and proper humanity. To this subject we now turn. Important as it is, it will not occupy us long. What we have to consider here is, on the one hand, the reality of our Lord's humanity; and, on the other, the peculiarities which distinguish Him from all other men.

That our Lord possessed a real and proper human nature was at an early period called in question by some whose speculative tendencies would not allow them to receive in simplicity of faith the revealed doctrine concerning the union of the divine and human natures in His one person. Fully convinced that He was divine, they refused to believe that He was also human; and hence they attempted to maintain that His humanity was not real—that it was only a phantasma, or that it was not of the same quality with that of man. Tertullian describes the two views thus: “Erraverunt in ipsa carne ejus, aut nullius veritatis contententes eam (unde phantasma dicitur), aut propriæ qualitatis” (*De Resurrec. Carnis*, 2). Those who held these views both passed alike under the name of Doketæ, *i.e.* δόκῃται, or Apparitionists, from the Greek δοκεῖν, to seem, to appear. Strictly speaking, the Doketæ were those who thought Christ's humanity only apparent or phantasmal; it was Marcion and Valentinus who denied that His humanity possessed the proper quality; the former holding that Jesus Christ suddenly came down from heaven in a body fashioned there, and of a different nature from that of man; the latter maintaining that, though He was apparently born of the Virgin Mary, He merely made use of her as a channel through which He passed into the world,

"just as water passes through a pipe" (καθάπερ ὕδωρ διὰ σωλήνος ὁδεύει).<sup>1</sup> These views were in general resisted by Christians as heretical and dangerous; for, as Novatian says, they concluded that if Jesus was a mere phantasm and not a reality, none of the things which He performed could have been really done by Him ("nihil verum eorum quæ gessit fecerit, si ipse phantasma et non veritas fuit," *De Trin.* c. 10). But there were several of the orthodox Fathers who, whilst they maintained the reality of Christ's humanity, yet sought to modify and qualify that assertion by various restrictions. Thus Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup> maintained that the body of Jesus was not sustained by ordinary means, but by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, and said that to suppose that the body of the Saviour required for its sustenance the ordinary means would be ridiculous (γέλως ἂν εἴη). Origen, though strenuously opposed to Doketic views, yet attributed to our Lord's humanity qualities which would have essentially removed it from the ordinary nature of man.<sup>3</sup> In opposition to all such modifications as well as to the grossest Doketism, we have to maintain the real and proper humanity of Jesus Christ—that He was *verus homo* as well as *verus Deus*.

(I.) The evidence in support of this position from Scripture may be stated thus:—

i. He is spoken of by names appropriate to one possessing really and truly the nature of man. He is expressly called "the man Christ Jesus." In speaking of Himself He uses the expression "a man that hath told you the truth." He again and again calls Himself the "Son of Man." It is said of Him that He became flesh; and He is called the first-born son of Mary. With these literal and prosaic designations proper to His humanity may be joined such figurative designations as "the seed of the woman," "the seed of Abraham," the "rod or sprout from the root of Jesse," and such like, which are well-known designations of the Messiah, and which are appropriated to Jesus as the Christ. By the use of such

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, *Ep.* 145, *Opp.* tom. iv. p. 1248; Tertullian, *Adv. Valent.* c. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Strom.* vi. 9, p. 775, ed. Potter, *Pædag.* i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Cels.* iv. 19, vii. 16; *Comment. in Matt.* p. 966c, etc.

names and appellations the sacred writers and our Lord Himself evidently intended to teach us to regard Him as a real partaker of our nature.

ii. It is expressly said that when He became flesh He took upon Him a nature the same as ours. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. ii. 14). Whether we understand "the children" here (*τὰ παιδία*) as meaning infants, or as denoting human beings, or as designating the people of Christ, does not greatly matter for our present argument. In any case, the parties so designated are human beings by whose participation of flesh and blood is meant the possession of the nature peculiar and appropriate to man; not, as Tholuck and Grotius represent it, the body as opposed to the soul, or the mortal as opposed to the glorified body, but the human nature as contrasted with the incorporeal uncreated God [Ebrard]; and as the apostle says that Jesus Christ not only partook of these same, but partook of them *παραπλησίως*, that is, not merely after the *similitude* of theirs, but after the same *manner* or *kind* as theirs, it follows that He was really and truly a partaker of human nature. As the ancient Fathers remark on *παραπλησίως* that it signifies *οὐ δοκητῶς ἀλλ' ἀληθινῶς, οὐ φανταστικῶς ἀλλ' ὄντως*, and it almost seems as if the apostle had inserted this adverb in order to guard beforehand against the Doketic heresy. Certain it is that his words clearly assert that our Lord Jesus Christ took upon Him the substance of our nature, and was really a man, though not merely a man.

With this we may compare what John says (1 Ep. iv. 2, 3): "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist." By the phrase here used, *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα*, the apostle intends the possession by Jesus Christ of a real and proper humanity (comp. Lücke, *in loc.*, and *Introd.* p. 72 ff.; De Wette, *in loc.*, etc.); and upon the admission of this he lays stress as an essential of Christianity. Nor can this be wondered at; for, as Lücke remarks, "if Christ has not been a man and our brother, the Messiah remained a mere toy of the

imagination and a phantom ; thus the redemption by Him is only ideal and imaginary ; it has no reality or existence within the sphere of humanity, and man cannot appropriate it to himself as his own. It therefore clearly follows that he who denies the *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι* of Christ is an anti-christ ; he abolishes the essence of the Christian faith and annihilates it " (*Introd.* p. 78).

iii. The two parts essential to human nature are distinctly ascribed to Jesus Christ in Scripture. These are a body and a reasonable soul, the union of which constitute a real man. Our Lord had both. He Himself speaks frequently of both as pertaining to Him : " This is my body," said He in instituting the Lord's Supper ; and though these words are to be understood symbolically, being uttered of the bread which *represents* His body in that ordinance and not of His very body itself, yet this very fact contains a special evidence of the reality of His body ; for how could bread, a concrete mass, represent His body if that had been a mere phantasm ? So He spoke of Mary as having come to anoint His body for the burial ; and after His resurrection He said to His doubting and agitated disciples, " Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have " (Luke xxiv. 39), — a passage which Ignatius quotes against the Doketæ as affirming the reality of our Lord's corporeal nature, and that He was not *δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον* [*Ad Smyrn.* § 3]. Of His soul He spoke when He said, " The Son of Man came to give His life (*ψυχὴν*, His soul ; comp. *יְהִי*, Isa. liii. 10) a ransom for many " (Matt. xx. 28) ; when He exclaimed, " My soul is troubled, and what shall I say ? " and again, " My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death ; " and when on the cross He said, " Father, into Thy hand I commit my spirit." With equal clearness do His followers speak of His body, and of His soul or spirit. " He spake concerning the temple of His body," is the remark of the historian when correcting the mistake of the Jews as to our Lord's meaning when He said, " Destroy this temple, and in three days I shall build it up again " (John ii. 19, 21). Paul speaks of " the body of His flesh " (Col. i. 22), and of His having opened for us " a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, His flesh " (Heb. x. 20). And the sacred writers continually speak of

His blood, and of other parts of the animal body as realities subsisting in Him. They speak also of the "mind" that was in Him, and ascribe to Him faculties such as belong to and characterize the spiritual nature of man. Our Lord then had both a body and a soul, the union of which constituted Him a true and proper man. Hence in some of the creeds of the Reformation it was formally asserted that "*anima Domini Jesu Christi non absque sensu et ratione, ut Apollinaris sentiebat, neque caro absque anima, ut Eunomius docebat; sed anima cum ratione sua et caro cum sensibus suis.*"<sup>1</sup>

iv. The affections and attributes of a true man are ascribed to Him. As a child He grew both in stature and in intelligence (Luke ii. 40, 52); He was susceptible of domestic and social influences, loving His parents and being obedient to them; and He acquired knowledge both of men and things by the ordinary processes of learning and experience. As a man He exhibited all the ordinary features of humanity. He had the ordinary appetites of man, was susceptible of hunger and thirst and weariness, and sought to relieve His wants by food and drink and sleep, as all men do. He had a large share of the sufferings and sorrows that ordinarily befall men here, and they affected Him just as they affect us, so far as physical influences are concerned. He had the ordinary sympathies and affections of men, seeking the society of those He loved, sharing in their griefs and joys, and craving their affections in return. He had the ordinary susceptibilities of men, feeling pain and sorrow and anguish, shrinking from death and agony with the recoil natural to man, and seeking refuge and help where all good men seek them, in prayer to God. He had a moral nature like ours, being under law to God, obedient to the rule of righteousness and truth, but at the same time capable of being solicited by temptations from the paths of piety and godliness, though ever without effect. And, in fine, He had that great peculiarity which only a being possessed of a true animal nature can have—the possibility of dying; so that when He said upon the cross, "It is finished!" His body and soul were separated from each other, and, while the former was laid in the tomb, the latter "returned to God who gave it." By all

<sup>1</sup> Helvetic Confession.

these affections and attributes He showed that He was in deed and in truth a partaker of the same nature with us.

Seeing, then, that Scripture unqualifiedly designates Him a man, and calls Him the son of a woman, and describes His birth of her as that of the same nature with that of an ordinary child; and seeing that He is formally described as having assumed our nature and appeared in human flesh; and seeing He exhibited all the essential attributes and qualities and tendencies which peculiarly distinguish man, the conclusion cannot be legitimately avoided that our Lord Jesus Christ was really and truly a man, in very deed bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. The application of every appropriate test evinces this. "A being," says Dr. Pye Smith, "who acts and speaks, and is addressed as a man, and who exhibits all the properties which distinguish man from other beings, must be a *real* MAN. To such a being, possessing the nature and essential attributes of a man, it is correct to ascribe a *proper* humanity, even if it should be the fact that by the possession of a different class of properties which are known to be the attributes of another nature this other nature should appear to be preternaturally conjoined with that being."<sup>1</sup> Though not *ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος*, He was *ἀληθινὸς ἄνθρωπος*.

(II.) The ancient heretics, who denied or called in question the true and proper humanity of our Lord, sought support for their views in some of the statements of Scripture.

i. They appealed to the appearance of the Angel of Jehovah and of ordinary angels under the human form, as recorded in various parts of both Testaments. But (i.) such instances only prove the *possibility* of spiritual agents appearing in the human form without actually possessing a human nature; they do not at all indicate that the appearance of Jesus Christ was of this kind. (ii.) No analogy can subsist between appearances assumed for a brief period, and such a life-long existence as that of Jesus Christ upon this earth. (iii.) Though some of the angels seem to have partaken of food when they came down in human form to earth, yet it does not appear that this was done in any case in obedience to the calls of hunger, or for the sake of sustaining the nature they

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 95.



had assumed. (iv.) In no case is such language used concerning any of these angels as that "he was a man," that "he became flesh," and that in order to be made like unto us, who partake of flesh and blood, he likewise took part in the same; and (v.) the objects for which angels appeared in human form were such as might be accomplished by a mere apparition, whereas those for which Christ appeared could be accomplished only by a real man. "Let those," says Tertullian, "who refer the flesh of Christ to the example of angels, saying it was not born, *i.e.* not really flesh, compare the reasons for which Christ came into the world with those for which angels came. None of these angels descended that he might be crucified, might experience death, might be raised from the dead. But if there was no such reason for angels becoming incorporate, there was no need for their assuming flesh by being born; they came not to die, therefore they needed not to be born. But as Christ was sent to die, He behoved to be born, for he who is not born does not use to die."<sup>1</sup> In short, as Gerhard remarks, "If you attentively inquire, you will find that the incarnation of Christ and the manifestations of angels differed in respect of all causes, efficient, material, formal, and final."

ii. An appeal was made by the Doketists and Valentinians to such expressions as those of Paul in Rom. viii. 3, where Christ is said to have been sent *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκός*, in the likeness of flesh, and in Phil. ii. 7, where He is said to have been found *ἐν σχήματι*, in fashion as a man. With regard to the former of these, it may suffice to remark that Paul's whole expression is *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*, in the likeness of flesh *of sin*; the meaning of which is that He came, not in sinful flesh, but only in the likeness of it; that this flesh was "*similis peccatrici non tamen peccatrix*," as Gerhard expresses it; and consequently there is nothing here to invalidate the belief that physically the flesh He assumed was the same as ours. What is excluded by this phrase is not the reality of human nature, but the stain and blot of sin. As Tertullian tersely expresses it, "*Similitudo ad peccati titulum pertinet non ad substantiæ mendacium.*"<sup>2</sup> With regard to the latter passage, all turns on the meaning of the word *σχῆμα*. Now, that this signifies fashion, form,

<sup>1</sup> *De Carne Christi.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

or outward habit or condition, cannot be denied, but it surely does not follow that because Christ is said to have been found in outward form and conditions as a man, His humanity was nothing *but* an outward form, a mere shadow. And besides, would not such a statement have been fatal to the apostle's object in this passage? His design is to hold up Jesus Christ as an example to His followers; His example lay in His acting *σχήματι ὡς ἄνθρωπος*, as became a man; but if He was not really a man, if His humanity was a mere shadow, of what use is His example to us, and how can it be binding on us? If *we* are to do just as Christ did, then as His humiliation was not a real but only an apparent one, and His obedience to the Father a mere shadow, it must then be by a feigned humility and pretended obedience that we are to serve God.

It would serve no good end whatever to recapitulate and refute all the notions which the restless ingenuity of the ancient heretics started upon the subject of our Lord's human nature. Suffice it that we have seen from Scripture abundant reason to believe in the reality and integrity of that nature as in deed and truth constituting Him "the man Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

(III.) But though the human nature of Christ was in substance the same as ours, it had its own properties and peculiarities. Among these theologians specify the following:—

i. His extraordinary conception. His birth was the same as that of other men, but He was conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of His virgin mother. When the angel announced to her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, he said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). And when Joseph, her espoused husband, was minded to put her away, under the impression that she had been unfaithful to her vows, an angel was sent to say to him, "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." These passages distinctly announce the fact of a miraculous conception, so that the humanity of

<sup>1</sup> As the Helvetic Confession expresses it, He is "*juxta humanam naturam nobis hominibus consubstantialem.*"

Jesus Christ was derived wholly from His mother, or, as the Athanasian Creed expresses it, He was "man, of the substance of His mother, born into the world." In this aspect His humanity differed from that of all other men; it was not, like that of Adam, immediately created by God; it was not, like that of all Adam's descendants, begotten by the agency of man. Beyond the mere fact, however, it behoves us not to inquire; suffice it that in that we have an assurance that, from the very first, His humanity had in it something supernatural, and that from the beginning it was without stain or spot.

ii. Our Lord, though in human nature, was without sin. He came, indeed, *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*, but "His fellowship with humanity, suffering on account of sin, was in Him simply a fellowship of suffering, not a fellowship of sin."<sup>1</sup> He was free from all sin, whether of nature or practice. He emphatically "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). He could challenge His enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46). He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Pet. ii. 22). He was, as He is, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26). Than this statement none could be more clear and unqualified. It declares Him to have been *ὁσιος*, pure in the sight of God; *ἄκακος*, blameless in relation to men, without *κακία* or wickedness, without vice or inclination to do harm; *ἀμίαντος*, without stain or spot, defect or blemish; *κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν*, separated from sinners, having no communion with them as sinners, or participation in their sin. Nor is it merely true of Him historically that He did not sin, it is also to be affirmed of Him that He was impeccable—not, indeed, in a physical sense, which would be negative of His moral freedom, but in a moral sense, as one whose nature was so set against sin that evil had no power over Him to lead Him away.

iii. He was as a man not only exempt from all sin, but He was pre-eminently endowed with all moral graces and excellences. He was not only such a man as the world never saw before, but He became in moral excellence "higher than the heavens" (Heb. vii. 26), *i.e.* He exhibited a moral

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *Christliche Lehre*, p. 265.

and spiritual lustre to which even the holy angels do not attain. By universal admission, even on the part of some who reject His religion and deny His highest claims, He stands not only pre-eminent but alone in the majesty, the symmetry, the beauty of His character. In Him we see everything that can dignify or adorn the character in absolute perfection and in perfect harmony. His character is as unique as it is beautiful; "nought but itself can be its parallel." Holy from the womb, in the congenial soil of His heart all virtues sprang up and flourished spontaneously. Perhaps what strikes us most is the extraordinary *combination* of excellences which His character displays. Meekness and majesty, firmness and gentleness, zeal and prudence, composure and warmth, patience and sensibility, submissiveness and dignity, sublime sanctity and tender sympathy, piety that rose to the loftiest devotion, and benevolence that could stoop to the meanest sufferer, intense abhorrence of sin and profound compassion for the sinner, mingle their varied rays in the tissue of our Saviour's character, and produce a combination of virtues that fill the mind with wonder and delight. And, amid all this variety, there is the most perfect equipoise. He had not only all the entireness, He had also all the symmetry of virtue.<sup>1</sup>

iv. To all moral our Lord added all intellectual excellence. "The perfection of the soul," says Quenstedt, "is threefold—of the understanding, of the will, of the appetite." As our Lord was perfectly pure in all His affections and perfectly right in all His volitions, so He was perfect in His intelligence and understanding. How marvellous was His wisdom and knowledge! Called to perform a most difficult and delicate task, the introducing of a new religion among a people enthusiastically attached to the outward forms of that which they had received by tradition from their fathers, but dead to all spiritual interests, He presents the extraordinary spectacle of one who never made a mistake, who never had to retract, modify, or excuse a single utterance, who spoke so as to extort the admiration of His bitterest enemies, who were constrained to say, "Never man spake like this man." Noticeable also is the wisdom He displayed in the choice of

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Alexander's *Christ and Christianity*, Part II. ch. i.

His disciples—men remarkable for their honest, sincere, and truthful spirit, but at the same time men not to be drawn into any wild, delusive scheme, or to persevere in any course to their own hurt, unless fully certified that it was a course to which they were bound by a regard to truth and rectitude to adhere. See Him also in conflict with His subtle and keen opponents, never committing Himself to an adversary, never foiled by craft or worsted in argument, never failing to say the right thing at the fitting time, and ever covering with confusion those who sought to entangle Him in His talk. To His power as a teacher we cannot here properly refer, for as He Himself avowed that His doctrine was not His, but the Father's who had sent Him, the greatness of His doctrine cannot be appealed to as evidence of the greatness of His intellect, inasmuch as under this aspect He, as sent by God, stands on the same footing with the other prophets who came and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; though at the same time in the manner and method of His teaching, in the skill with which He adapted His teaching to the capacities and needs of those to whom He spoke, and the ease and simplicity with which He set forth the profoundest truths and unfolded heavenly things to those whose minds were conversant only with things of the earth, we have striking proof of the high intellectual capacity with which as a man He was endowed. So striking and so manifold are the manifestations of intellectual power furnished by the recorded sayings and doings of Christ during His ministry on earth, that they show that in the Man Christ Jesus there was an intellect not only of the highest order, but altogether peculiar and unparalleled among the children of men.

v. There is reason to believe that our Lord's bodily person corresponded to His mental and moral perfection. Scripture, indeed, says nothing directly on this point; but there are incidental notices which lead us to believe that His countenance was exceedingly prepossessing, and that He was literally, as the Psalmist described Him prophetically, "fairer than the sons of men." There must, we may well believe, have been something extraordinarily attractive and winning in that countenance which led the mothers of Israel to place their

infants in His arms, and made the infants cling to Him and feel safe in His embrace,—something very charming in the look of Him on whom as He passed along the women of His nation showered their admiration and exclaimed, “Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps that Thou hast sucked!” something very striking and impressive in the mien of Him on whom, after He had done a very common thing, a thing which was done by other men every day, “the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.” No authentic portrait of our Lord has come down to us; there were none among the Jews who could do for Him what the artists of Grecco and Rome have done for the illustrious among their countrymen; or, if there had been among the Jews those who either on canvas, or in gems, or marble, could have depicted His countenance and form, there were none who would not have thought it scorn to exercise their art on One whom the rulers of their nation rejected and condemned. Two medallions exist professing to be likenesses of Christ; but they are the productions of a later age, and are of no authority except as they may preserve a traditional reminiscence of the personal appearance of our Lord. The legends of an impression of the likeness of His countenance left by our Lord on the cloth with which He was wont to wipe His face, and which He sent to Abgarus, king of Edessa, of an impression of His likeness on the head-dress of Veronica which she handed to Him as He was passing to Calvary that He might wipe the blood from His brow, and received back from Him with His image imprinted upon it, and of the likeness said to have been left on the linen in which He had been wrapped in the sepulchre, are mere fables, the inventions of a superstitious and credulous age. A tradition, however, seems to have prevailed among the early Christians as to our Lord’s personal appearance; and though St. Augustine expressly says that of His appearance we are wholly ignorant, and that the likenesses of Him vary according to the fancy of the artist, there does appear to have been a generally accepted belief as to His appearance, and this has been embodied in that typical resemblance which all painters more or less closely follow in their pictures of Christ. Certain it is that a tradition was handed down through the

Middle Ages which was probably derived from the earliest period. It is preserved by Nicephorus, who lived in the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century, and in another form in a pretended letter of Lentulus, a Roman, who is supposed to have visited Jerusalem in the time of our Lord, and to have seen Him. Neither of these is of any value except as they preserve to us what was the traditionary belief both of the Eastern and Western Churches regarding our Lord's appearance. The two descriptions do not agree in all points; but both present to us the picture of one in whom grace and dignity, physical beauty, and the marks of mental supremacy and excellence, are strikingly displayed.<sup>1</sup> The subject is one not of supreme importance, for it matters little comparatively what was the aspect of that outward guise under which the Divine Word was pleased to veil His essential glory. But as it is His prerogative in all things to have the pre-eminence, it is pleasant as well as proper to think that He had this as well in bodily appearance and form as in mind and spirit. Of one thing we may be sure, that as His miraculous birth precluded all hereditary predisposition to infirmity, disease, or blemish, and His calm, serene, pure, and sinless life preserved Him from all the degrading and injurious influences of passion or appetite; and as the constant predominance of gentle, loving, and noble emotions would exert a moulding influence on His features, there would be nothing arising from Himself to mar or deface the native beauty of that "Holy Thing" that was born of the Virgin. It is not undeserving of notice that though the evangelists represent our Lord as in many respects a sufferer, and as subject to weariness and often to want, there is no hint given or statement made which would lead us to believe that He ever was sick, or suffered from any disease. From all bodily ailments He seems to have been perfectly free. The only sense in which He bore our sicknesses was that He took sickness off men and carried it away from them. Not in the grave only did the Holy One of God see no corruption, but all through His life on earth no seed of corruption, no element of disorder or decay, impaired the

<sup>1</sup> Both these are given by Geikie in his *Life of Christ*, vol. i. pp. 455, 456, where more on this subject will be found.

vigour or marred the beauty of that human body He had condescended to assume. All things considered, the strong presumption is that the old divines were right when they included "perfectio corporis" among the characteristics of our Lord's humanity.

Jesus Christ was thus Perfect Man as well as Very God. Whilst He presented to men a manifestation of God, so that they who came nighest to Him and beheld His glory saw in Him the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, He moved among men as the Perfection of Humanity, and presented to the view of the intelligent universe man as he was at first made in the image and likeness of Him by whom he was created.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

#### III. RELATIONS OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURES IN CHRIST.

We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us in Scripture as truly and properly divine, and also as truly and properly human. We have now to inquire in what relation these two representations stand to each other.

As there are not two Christs, and as it is of one and the same person that both these representations are given, we can come to no other conclusion than that a *twofold* nature belonged to the one Christ. It is impossible to conceive of a simple nature in such a case. Either there were two persons altogether, one divine and the other human, or the divine nature and the human were united in the one person of Jesus Christ. But the former is excluded by the language of Scripture, which assigns both these characters to the one Messiah or Christ; therefore only the latter remains possible. Hence the doctrine, commonly received in all the orthodox Churches, of the union of two natures in the one person of



the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> We thus advance a step. We have seen that He is Θεός; we have seen that He is ἄνθρωπος; we now see that He is θεάνθρωπος.

We hold, then, as pertaining to the person of the Redeemer a duality of natures, a unity of person. And here it may be as well to define the sense in which these terms are used by theologians. A nature (*natura*, φύσις, οὐσία, μορφή) is a subject endowed with certain qualities and faculties; a Person (*persona*, ὑπόστασις, ὑφιστάμενον, πρόσωπον) is a subject intelligent and self-subsisting. We say that the nature of God is different from that of man, because the peculiar qualities and faculties of the two subjects are different; and we speak of God as a Person because we conceive of Him as an intelligent existence, subsisting *per se*, and not either the soul of the world, or the substance of the world, as the Pantheists teach. We say, therefore, that Jesus Christ is possessed of the divine and human natures, because to Him, as subject, the properties and qualities of both are ascribed; and we say He has these in one person, because He, as the subject of these, subsists *per se*, and is one intelligence.

(I.) Now, respecting the relation of these two natures to each other, the following things may be observed:—

i. That the union was effected by the divine uniting itself to the human. It is better to express it thus than to say that the divine nature *assumed* the human into union with it. The language of Scripture is, that the Logos *became* flesh (σὰρξ ἐγένετο); that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was *made* (γενόμενον) of a woman; that as those whom He came to

<sup>1</sup> "Sunt igitur duæ naturæ, divina et humana, in unitate personæ inseparabiliter conjunctæ." *Conf. Aug.* art. 3.

"Siquidem ita conjunctam unitamque humanitati divinitatem asserimus, ut sua utrique naturæ solida proprietates maneat, et tamen ex duabus illis unus Christus constitutatur." Calvin, *Institutio Christianæ Religionis*, lib. II. xiv. 1.

"Two whole and perfect natures, that is, the Godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man." *Art. 2 of the Church of England.*

See also Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. viii. § 2: "The Son of God, the Second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance."

redeem had in common flesh and blood, He also *shared* (μετέσχε) flesh and blood; that He was the second Adam, the man Christ Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, etc. The only passage that seems to authorize or favour the phraseology that our Lord *took* on Him or assumed human nature is Heb. ii. 16 as it appears in the A. V., where we read, "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but took on Him the seed of Abraham," which may be taken to mean that He assumed the nature belonging to the seed of Abraham. But in the Greek there is nothing about *nature*, either of angels or men. This is a supplement of our translators, and a most unhappy one. Had the apostle meant to affirm anything concerning the nature of our Lord, he would have specified Adam, and not Abraham, as the type which He assumed. The proper rendering is, "He took not on Him the *help* of angels, but He took on Him the help," etc.

We are justified, however, by these passages in affirming that in Jesus Christ there was a true incarnation of God. It was not an ἀποθέωσις or deification that took place in Him; it was an ἐνάνθρωπησις, or man-becoming, an incarnation (ἐνσάρκωσις), or an incorporation (ἐνσωμάτωσις).

ii. This personal union of two natures in the one Christ is a union entirely *sui generis*, and cannot be compared to any with which we are familiar. It is not an essential union, as if the two natures coalesced into one, which, like a chemical compound, was somewhat different from either, as Eutyches taught. Nor is it, as Cerinthus and Nestorius taught, a simple apposition of the one nature to the other, as if they were joined merely superficially, like two separate objects that are mechanically agglutinated. Nor is it a mixing of the two natures, so that they are confused the one with the other. Nor is it a merely mystical or moral union, in virtue of which the one nature always acts in unison with the other. It is a union of which all that we can say is—(i.) that it is *personal*; (ii.) that it is *real*, i.e. that the two partake of each other, so that each has in common with the other what is proper to it, yet ever so as that the divine shall permeate and appropriate the human, not the human the divine; (iii.) that it is *supernatural*, and as to the mode of it altogether surpassing our comprehension. Some of the Fathers and older

theologians have sought to illustrate it by the union of the soul and body in man, or by the union of fire and matter in a red-hot iron. "In Jesus Christ," says Augustine, "the λόγος and the man constitute but one person, as in mankind generally the soul and the body constitute but one" (*Ep.* 102 [169]). "If anything among things human can be found resembling so great a mystery, that which seems the most apposite similitude is that drawn from man, whom we see to consist of two substances, of which neither is so mixed with the other that it does not retain the property of its own nature. For neither is the body the soul, nor the soul the body" (Calvin, *Inst.* lib. II. xiv. § 1). In the *Confession of Faith*, the union is thus described:—"So that two whole perfect natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion: Which Person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man." But these similitudes can in no degree help us to comprehend the mode in which the divine and the human natures subsist in Christ. They only show us that two distinct subsistences may be intimately united without being mixed or confused, without losing their individuality, or being merely appended to each other. They help us also to account for a result of this personal union of the two natures in Christ to which we have now to advert, and in reference to which both Augustine and Calvin adduce their illustration.

iii. I remark then, thirdly, that in consequence of this personal union of the divine nature and the human in Jesus Christ, statements are made concerning the concrete person which are strictly true only of one or other of the natures therein united. This is technically called "*communio naturarum*," and is in reality inseparable from that reality of union between the two of which we have already spoken. "A man, for example," says Augustine, in continuation of the passage before cited, "is a philosopher only in virtue of his mind; nevertheless it is customary and lawful to say this philosopher has been killed, is dead and is buried, though all these are incident to a man only in virtue of his body, and not at all in virtue of that which made him a philosopher.

It is the same with Jesus Christ; and just as, on the one hand, it is said of Him that He is the Son of God and King of Glory, and other similar statements which are true of Him as the Logos; so, on the other hand, it is said of Him that He was crucified, though we know that this happened to Him through means of His body, and not by reason of that which made Him King of Glory." "In speaking of the soul by itself," says Calvin, "we affirm of it what cannot befall the body, and of the body again we say what by no means suits the soul; and of the whole man what cannot be taken without absurdity either of the soul by itself or of the body by itself. In fine, the properties of the soul are transferred to the body, and those of the body to the soul, whilst, nevertheless, he who consists of these is one man and not more. Such modes of speaking indicate that there is in man one person composed of two conjoined, and that there are two diverse natures which constitute this. So the Scriptures speak of Christ; they sometimes attribute to Him what properly ought to be referred to His humanity, sometimes what peculiarly belongs to His divinity, sometimes what is appropriate to the two natures conjoined, and can be sufficiently understood of neither apart. And that conjunction of the twofold nature which is in Christ they so reverently regard that at times they communicate the one with the other, which trope the ancients called *ιδίωματων κοινωνία*." <sup>1</sup> In illustration of these statements Calvin appeals to the following passages: John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am," where Christ, speaking in human nature, affirms what was true of Him only in His higher or divine nature. So also when Paul calls Him *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* (Col. i. 15), or when He Himself says that He had glory with the Father before the world was (John xvii. 5), language is used of His concrete being which is strictly true only of His divine nature. On the other hand, when He is called the servant of God; when it is said of Him that He grew in wisdom and in favour with God and man (Luke iii. 52); when He Himself says that He did not His own will, but that of His Father in heaven (John vi. 38), language is used of His whole being which is strictly true only of His

<sup>1</sup> *Inst.* II. c. xiv. § 1.

human nature. We have instances also of this communion of properties in such statements as that God purchased His Church "with His own blood" (supposing *Θεός* to be the correct reading here) (Acts xx. 28); that the Jews crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. ii. 8); that the hands of the apostles had "handled the word of life;" "that God gave His life for us" (1 John i. 1 and iii. 16): in all of which that is ascribed to the divine nature of Christ which could happen strictly only to His human. And, on the other hand, when Christ, speaking in the flesh, called Himself the Son of Man "who is in heaven" (John iii. 13), He used of His human nature language which is strictly true only of His divine. But the clearest passages, says Calvin, on this head are those, of which there are several in the Gospel of John, which comprehend both natures together. Thus when it is said, that to Him has it been given to remit sins (John i. 29), to raise whom He wills, to bestow righteousness, sanctification, and salvation; that He has been appointed to judge the quick and the dead (v. 22-29); that He is the Light of the world (viii. 12), the true Vine (xv. 1), and the Door of the fold (x. 7); that He sits at the right hand of God (Heb. i. 3), and such like the true key to which, Calvin says, is the personal union of the divine and human nature in the one Christ, such expressions and statements can be understood neither of one simply divine nor of one simply human; they receive the proper explanation only when understood of one who united the divine and the human in one person.

Calvin speaks of these modes of expression as tropes or figures. By this he intends that they are analogical modes of expressing what we cannot directly and immediately comprehend. By the Lutheran divines, however, they have been taken as expressing a real consequent of the personal union of the two natures in Jesus Christ, and on this they have raised their doctrine of a "*communicatio idiomatum*," and have attempted a systematic statement of the subject for which Scripture furnishes no ground, and which carries them much beyond the bounds of sober inquiry. They divide what they call the idiomatic properties into three genera. The first includes those in which the properties of the divine nature or of the human are ascribed to the whole person of Christ,

which is denominated from one or other of these natures. This comprehends all such instances as those already referred to, and embraces the whole of what can be safely said on the subject. But they add to this a second genus, which they call "genus majestaticum," under which they class those instances in which the divine nature of the Son communicates its own proper glory to the human,—a class which, as distinct from the former, has plainly no existence; and a third, which they denominate a "communicatio apotelesmaticum," and describe as that by which in official acts each nature does what is proper to it with communication of the other; which also, as distinct from the first, is without authority or meaning. These distinctions are rejected by the Reformed Churches, and have been relinquished by most later Lutheran divines. "The Symbolical theory," says Stäudlin, "transgresses the bounds of its object, which is to give a sound illustration and the facts of the incarnation, and errs by the determination of definitions which have interest only from the standpoint of a bygone philosophy, and can satisfy only from that point of view."

In the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 6 ff.) the apostle describes Jesus Christ as having emptied or despoiled Himself (*ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*) when He appeared as a man on earth. In another place, also, he describes Him as though originally rich for our sakes becoming poor (2 Cor. viii. 9). Such statements undoubtedly mean that our Lord underwent a great change, and descended from that lofty position and state which properly belonged to Him to one far lower, in which He was humbled and suffered. But we must beware of being led to the conclusion that in this *kenosis*, or emptying, there was any change in essential properties, or the laying aside of any of the peculiar attributes of Deity. There was a change of state, but this does not involve a change of nature. The relinquishment of dignity and majesty is not the giving up of inherent qualities or properties. What our Lord gave up was, as His own words teach us, that glory, that manifested majesty and splendour, which He had with the Father before the world was, and which, relinquished for a time, He was to resume when His work on earth was finished. What He did not retain was the form of God, the *μορφή τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the manifestation of God, the apparent glory and dignity of God; but in

laying aside this He did not in the least relinquish or change the *οὐσία*, the essence and nature of God. The riches which He possessed before His incarnation were His not He, and in relinquishing them and becoming poor for our sakes He gave up no personal quality, relinquished none of His essential properties. They therefore are not to be followed who teach that the *κένωσις*, or *exinanitio*, or emptying of the Logos, took place in the sphere of His relative perfections, such as omniscience, omnipotence, etc., though not in that of His immanent perfections, such as blessedness, goodness, etc. In all that constitutes Deity, in all the essential perfections of Deity, He came when He was made of a woman, made under the law. In Him dwelt then, as in Him dwells now, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

iv. Finally, the union of the divine and human natures in the one Christ is constant and eternal. It is constant, *i.e.* as the human nature never existed apart from the divine in Christ, so all through His mediatorial working it was as God-man that He acted. The union was from the first moment of the formation of His humanity in the womb of the Virgin, and continued all through His life on earth, and continues still in His exalted state. This union will continue for ever. Christ, the apostle says, is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (Heb. vii. 16). As He is to be for ever with His people, preserving, sustaining, leading, and blessing them in heaven, His mediatorial agency cannot cease, nor that union of natures, in virtue of which He is Mediator, come to an end.

(II.) Turning from these speculations to the sure ground of Scripture, we have there abundant reason, as we have seen, for receiving this fundamental article of our faith, that Jesus Christ the author of our redemption is God-man, two natures in one person, and that all that was done by the one Christ was by Him in this twofold nature in some sense, though in what sense we do not pretend to explain. This, like all the other doctrines of the Bible, is set forth chiefly for its practical utility, and though theoretically it may be burdened with difficulties, it is practically a doctrine full of comfort and encouragement. The practical and religious importance of the doctrine may be stated as follows:—

(i.) The high dignity which is thereby conferred upon Christianity as a system of religion. It is not a mere speculation, nor a form of religious philosophy, nor a conjectural response to the deep religious longings of the soul: it is based upon a great divine fact—the incarnation of the divine nature in the human, so that He who was the former of man becomes his reformer.

(ii.) The high honour thus put upon human nature, seeing God did not disdain to assume it into union with His own, and to elevate it to the throne of heaven. Here we see human nature only in ruins, and covered with defilement, and the spectacle may well fill us with humiliation and shame. But our hopes revive, our confidence is restored, our depression is revoked, when we behold humanity, true real humanity, in union with true real Deity in the Person of Jesus Christ. We feel that, fallen as we are, our nature in itself is yet worthy of being the companion of the Divine. We stand amid ruins, it is true, but they are the ruins of a noble temple in which the Deity did not disdain to dwell, and which is capable of being restored, so as once more to be a fit dwelling for the Most High.

(iii.) The model afforded in the perfect humanity of Christ of that moral and spiritual excellence to which our nature is capable of being brought. When we realize the fact that Jesus Christ was very man as well as very God, we see in Him what man was made to be, what man through grace may become, and what every believer in Christ is destined to become in the perfected state. In Him we see all goodness embodied, and humanity once more adorned with all the beauty of holiness. He who came to restore virtue to earth and to glorify God in that nature in which He had been insulted and dishonoured, showed in that nature a pattern of virtue so comprehensive that we have only to let this mind be in us which was also in Him when He humbled Himself for our salvation in order to clothe ourselves with all the moral excellence of which our nature is capable. "He hath animated," says Chalmers, "the moralities of our terrestrial condition with the breath and spirit of the upper sanctuary, and hath thereby shown that our condition, humble as it is, admits an impress upon it of a celestial character, and



so of being elevated to celestial glory. When I see in the person of Jesus Christ how the everyday virtues and commonest occasions of life were throughout impregnated with the very spirit of the Divinity, I think I can better understand, when told to resemble Him, what it is to be filled with the whole fulness of God.”<sup>1</sup>

(iv.) The manifestation thus given of the transcendent love of God, in that He Himself came down and took upon Him our nature, and suffered for our redemption. Suppose in our walks among the abodes of the poor and outcast we were to come on one whose high intelligence proclaimed him a man fit to give law to thought, whose pure and blameless life was a marvel and a lesson to all around him, whose whole time was occupied in plans and acts of benevolence, and who stood out from all men we had ever seen before, alike by the grandeur and the simplicity of his life: should we not wonder that one so fitted to grace the loftiest sphere should be found in one of the lowliest, that one so qualified to command should be content to serve? But suppose we should hear that this man was actually born to move in the very highest circles of society,—that it belonged to him of right to hold the sceptre of empire,—and that he had of his own free choice relinquished the splendours and privileges of royalty, had denuded himself of rank and wealth, and had gone down to live among the poor and wretched that thereby he might the more effectually reach them and rescue them from misery: with what emotions of astonishment and admiration should we not be filled as we contemplated so transcendent a pattern of condescension and benevolence! But what is this to what is presented to us in Jesus Christ? When the Divine Word became flesh, He descended to a nature infinitely lower than His own; the Creator came down to submit to the conditions of the nature He had created; the King eternal and immortal condescended to claim fraternity with beings whose foundation is in the dust, and who perish before the moth; the Being who inherited eternity, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, submitted to dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and to shut up His glories in a tenement of dust. Here surely was a love that

<sup>1</sup> See Chalmers' *Institutes of Theology, Supplementary Lectures*, Lect. iii. p. 457.

passeth knowledge, a condescension that cannot be measured, a manifestation of benevolence such as exceeds all human experience and comprehension. It is the great manifestation of Him who is Love ; a lesson of God which we may receive though we cannot fully grasp it, even as we receive the sunlight without being able to appropriate the orb whence it streams.

(v.) The confidence thus inspired in us as dependent on Jesus Christ for redemption in that we know Him to be divine, and therefore sufficient to save us ; to be human, and therefore able to sympathize with us and to compassionate us. Whilst He sits on heaven's throne and is worshipped there as Lord of all, He is at the same time the merciful and faithful High Priest of His Church, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in that He Himself hath suffered is able to succour them that are tried.

(vi.) When taken in connection with the work which the Redeemer of man had to accomplish in order to man's redemption, the importance of this union of the divine and human natures in Christ becomes most conspicuous. Without this He could not have stood in our place and made atonement for us. It was necessary that our Sacrifice should put on our nature in order that He really might become our Representative, in order that He might really enter into all our circumstances, and in order that our sin might be punished, and the law we had broken magnified in the same nature in which the sin had been committed and the law transgressed. It was equally necessary that He should be divine in order that His sacrifice should have dignity and worth sufficient to afford satisfaction to the divine justice, and lay a solid basis for our acceptance with God.

For all these reasons it was necessary that the Redeemer of man should be God "manifest in the flesh." Let us be grateful both for the fact itself and for the abundant evidence which assures us of its truth ; and let us, well established in this fundamental doctrine, ever give it its own place in all our expositions of Christianity, nor yield it up in its scriptural integrity at the bidding of either a false philosophy or a carnal self-righteousness. Thus shall we best promote the end of that ministry to which we have devoted our lives ; thus shall

we best sustain the divine life in our own souls; and thus shall we best prepare ourselves, and those over whom we may have influence in religious matters, for the higher exercises of the heavenly world where the God-man Mediator sits enthroned, the centre of all authority and the source of all blessing, and where a ceaseless chorus of worship resounds to the praise of the Lamb that was slain.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### CHRISTOLOGY.

#### SECOND DIVISION.—THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

##### PRELIMINARY—THE OFFICES OF CHRIST AS MEDIATOR.

1. Those who apprehend and accept the revealed doctrine of the incarnation will be prepared to find that some great end was intended to be answered by this transcendent fact. God does nothing in vain; nor does He ever employ means without an adequate and commensurate end. When, consequently, we behold Him sending His Son into the world—when we learn that the Son emptied Himself of His glory, assuming our nature and making Himself of no reputation—when we are taught to adore Him as God manifest in the flesh, yet submitting to poverty, indignity, sorrow, suffering, and death; we are constrained to believe that some end of immense importance was contemplated by the divine mind as to be attained by means so vast and so unparalleled. Hence arises the inquiry into the design and end of our Lord's incarnation and manifestation in our world, and this leads on to the subject of the offices of the Redeemer.

The Scriptures abundantly testify that the great design of our Lord's appearance here was to reconcile man to God, to repair the breach which sin had created between the Creator and His creature, and to deliver man from the evils under which sin had brought him. "This is a faithful saying," says

the Apostle Paul, "and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). He "suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). Through Him we have the reconciliation—the *καταλλαγή* or at-one-ment (Rom. v. 11). On this point the testimony of Scripture is full and unanimous; so that it must be admitted on all hands that in some sense the appearance of Jesus Christ in our world was a divinely-appointed scheme for the deliverance of man from that state of evil under which sin had brought him.

Now, there are three great processes through which man must pass in order that this end may be fully secured to him. In the first place, he must be restored from that state of legal disability under which sin has brought him; in the second place, he must be delivered from that state of error and ignorance into which sin has plunged him; and thirdly, he must be placed under such a wise and salutary discipline as shall conduce to the healthy development of his spiritual faculties and capacities, so as that he may ultimately fulfil the high functions for which he is destined as a redeemed sinner. Through these processes man must pass, and of these Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of man, has the management. Hence the threefold office with which He has been invested,—that of a Priest, that of a Prophet, and that of a King. As a Priest, He removes from man the legal disabilities which forbid his approach unto God; as a Prophet, He disperses the ignorance that misleads men to their destruction, and teaches them that truth which enlightens and saves; and as a King, He subjects them to that wise and well-ordered discipline by which they shall be best fitted for those high places to which He, of His royal bounty, shall raise them.

It is in consequence of this, His official character, that the Redeemer is specially designated the MESSIAH or CHRIST, *i.e.* THE ANOINTED. Under the ancient dispensation it was ordained that priests, prophets, and kings should be set apart or consecrated to their office by being anointed with oil. Nor was this a mere formal ceremony; it had under it a deep symbolical meaning. Oil, as the physical support of light, and as the refresher and sustainer of life, was among the Hebrews the selected and appropriate symbol of the Divine Spirit.

Now, as it is from the agency of that Spirit that all fitness for such offices as those with which the ancient functionaries in the Jewish commonwealth were invested must come, they were anointed with oil to indicate this, and at the same time as a pledge that God would give them that fitness which they needed. They were thus symbolical Messiahs or Christs; and, as what they were typically Jesus was really, He, on whom the Spirit was poured without measure, was emphatically *the* Messiah or Christ, the divinely-designated and divinely-qualified Priest, Prophet, and King of His Church.

These three functions, which are thus to be regarded as not merely assumed by the Saviour, but as constituting the work which the Father had given Him to do, comprise what has been called the mediatorial or redemptorial office of Christ (*officium mediatorium vel redemptorium*). This has been thus defined by Hollaz: "The mediatorial office of Christ is that by which He acts as Mediator between an offended God and man the sinner; confirming by His blood and death a covenant between both, publishing it thus sanctioned by His gospel, and offering it to the sinner, and by most potent government confirming and conserving what is thus offered." The mediatorial office of Christ comprehends all that by the Father's counsel and appointment He has done or is yet engaged in doing for the salvation of men; and it falls, from the very nature of the case, under the three branches which theologians have signalized as the Prophetic, the Priestly, and the Kingly.

2. The formal announcement of this distinction is due to the theologians of the Reformation. We find it only vaguely hinted at or only partially carried out in the writings of earlier divines. The prominence attached by the Ebionites to the *teaching* of Christ, and the light in which some were disposed to view His first advent as valuable chiefly because predictive of and preparatory for His second, constrained those who took juster views of His whole work to bring forward and insist upon His sacerdotal functions and propitiatory work as not less essentially a part of the truth revealed concerning Him. Tertullian in one passage<sup>1</sup> comes very near the enunciation of the dogma of Christ's threefold office when he says, "*est illa Dei voluntas quam Dominus administravit*

<sup>1</sup> *De Orat.* 4.

*prædicando, operando, sustinendo*," where the "prædicatio" may be referred to the Lord's work as a Prophet, the "operatio" to His work as a King endowed with all power, and the "sustentatio" to His endurance for us as our Priest and Sacrifice. But the very form of the phraseology used by Tertullian indicates how far he was from having any firm dogma of the three acts as proper official functions of the Redeemer. Augustine repeatedly speaks of Christ as a Priest and a King, and says expressly<sup>1</sup> that He was in this respect the Christ, the only King and Priest of His Church; but he nowhere formally enunciates this dogma. Eusebius comes still nearer to a dogmatic enunciation of this truth in a part of his invaluable *Demonstratio Evangelica*,<sup>2</sup> where he inquires why our Lord received the name *Χριστός*, or anointed, and answers this by a reference to the usage of the Jews in the anointing to office of their prophets, priests, and kings; but still we do not find here that precision or clearness which would justify us in concluding that Eusebius had the truth before his mind in the form of a recognised dogma. In another of his works, his *Ecclesiastical History*,<sup>3</sup> we find the dogma enunciated as clearly as we are accustomed to enunciate it, so far as words go. Speaking of the ancient prophets, priests, and kings, he says: "All these had a reference to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly Logos, the alone High Priest of all, and only King of all creation, and alone of prophets the Chief Prophet of the Father." Were it certain that Eusebius attached the same meaning to these terms, especially to the term "priest," that we do, this statement must be admitted as containing an indubitable enunciation of the theological dogma now under consideration; and, under any circumstances, it must be allowed to be a somewhat remarkable passage, standing alone as it does in early Christian literature as a formal expression of a dogma which was not currently received in the Church till many centuries afterwards.

Not a little was contributed towards the formation of this dogma by the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas. In his great treatise on theology we have a clear and full development of the priestly office and work of the

<sup>1</sup> *In Ps.* xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Book iv. c. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Book i. c. 3.

Mediator. But he says nothing of our Lord's prophetic or kingly office, nor does the dogma in the form in which we have it seem to have been before his mind.

We do not find any traces of this distribution of the work of Christ in the writings of Luther or in the early formularies of the Lutheran Church; and though Melancthon seems to have been aware of it, he gives it no place in his own theological system. The first to announce it formally, and to assign to it its due importance, was Calvin, who in his *Institutes*<sup>1</sup> has a chapter entitled, "Ut sciamus, quorsum missus fuerit Christus a Patre, et quid nobis attulerit, tria potissimum spectanda in eo esse, munus propheticum, regnum et sacerdotium," in which he explains this distribution, and insists on its importance. Since his time this has been adopted as one of the commonplaces of theology by divines of all schools, Lutheran and Arminian as well as Calvinistic; though some Lutheran divines of considerable name (as, *e.g.*, Reinhard, Döderlein, Ernesti, Storr, and Bretschneider) have rejected it.

3. The reasons for this rejection have been stated most fully by Ernesti in a dissertation on this subject contained in his *Opuscula Theologica*. It is entitled "De officio Christi triplice." He strives to show that the division in question is a purely artificial one; that the terms prophet, priest, and king, though used of the Saviour in Scripture, are not used in the sense which this division would ascribe to them; that it is impossible to discriminate the one function clearly from the other in the work of Christ; and that, as the terms are used in Scripture in a tropical sense as applied to Christ, it tends only to error and confusion to attempt to fix them down to precise meanings designatory of particular parts of the Saviour's working on behalf of men.

In reply to this it may be said,—

(1.) That even if it were granted that there were no essential distinctions in the work of Christ,—that that work was one individual whole, and that what we call His different offices are merely different relations of His one work on our behalf,—still, as He thus is admitted to occupy different positions, and to perform different acts relatively to us, it may be found convenient, and seems perfectly legitimate, to view these

<sup>1</sup> Book ii. c. 15.

differences of relation under separate heads as different functions of the one Saviour. It may be that when these offices are fully explained, the one shall be found to involve the other; and yet, in their general aspect, they may come out into so many practical differences that it shall be of advantage to the student that he should view them separately as different parts of the work of Christ,—just as in science it is held legitimate and found useful to view as distinct phenomena what in ultimate analysis may be found resolvable into one fundamental law.

(2.) It cannot be questioned that the division represents faithfully the three classes into which the acts of Christ on behalf of His people may be divided. This is not an *arbitrary* selection of three from among the many figurative and symbolical descriptions or appellations of the Saviour which are found in Scripture. On the contrary, not only are the offices of teaching truth, acting as a peace-maker between God and man, and ruling and protecting His people, specifically distinct from each other, but under one or other of these may all the representations of the Saviour's work which are found in Scripture be reduced. The classification, therefore, is a *real* one; and in that case the only question that can arise is one respecting the propriety of the nomenclature employed to express it. Reduced to these terms, the question becomes one of little moment; for if the threefold division be itself adopted as real it matters little, comparatively, how it be expressed. The advantage of adopting the nomenclature in use is that it is already found in Scripture, and is at once simple and comprehensive.

(3.) By preserving this arrangement we preserve the analogy between the Jewish state and the kingdom of Christ. The former of these was the type of the latter, and it is of importance that this relation of the two to each other should be preserved and kept in view. Now, the ancient dispensation was administered by an official agency consisting of prophets, priests, and kings; these three offices comprised the *whole* executive agency of the Theocracy; and men were appointed to fill them by being anointed. They were thus, as already observed, typical Messiahs or Christs, and it is because the Saviour came to do really for the



Church what these offices did for it typically that He is emphatically *the* Messiah, the Christ. This seems to render it of no small importance that such a division should be retained, were it for nothing else than to keep before our minds the fact that Jesus was the reality of which these ancient offices were but the type. We shall thus be led to juster views of the actual nature of His work by viewing it closely in its analogy with the official work of the servants of God under the Theocracy; for even to us it may be of use to arrive at the knowledge of spiritual things through the medium of outward shadows and symbols, or at least in connection with them. Besides, as Schleiermacher remarks, "it is befitting that we should preserve a continuity with these original representations, because the first formation of Christian thought was based on the connection of the new kingdom of God with the old. We can thus show that our conceptions agree with those which the early Christians formed whilst they regarded the offices of Christ as potentiated transferences of those by means of which the divine rule (the Theocracy) was displayed under the ancient covenant."<sup>1</sup> . . . "The kings," he continues, "were the proper viceregents of the God of Israel; to them was entrusted the government for the sustenance of the people, and, when necessary, for the renewing and improving of the community. The priests were the guardians of the temple and the holy things, and had to sustain immediate relation to God, as they presented prayers and sacrifice before Him, and brought back from Him forgiveness and blessing. The prophets were extraordinary messengers called and sent of God, belonging to both the other two and mediating between them, but not so abiding as they, for it was only in moments of urgency that the prophet came forth, now from amongst one of these powers, now from the midst of the people, for the purpose of either warning one of the ordained powers against turning into an evil way, or of reviving the former spirit in those who were sinking into a dead formalism. Now, to make clear the relation of the kingdom of heaven to that ancient theocracy was Christ, on whom all depends, set forth as uniting these three in Himself."

<sup>1</sup> *Christliche Glaube*, ii. p. 113, § 102.

(4.) It is only as we obtain just views of Christ's work under these three relations of teaching, atoning, and ruling, that we fully and correctly apprehend that work. If our Saviour was to effect the *καταλλαγή* at all, He must act both with God for us and with us for God, thereby really and effectually bringing both together. Now, He had to act with God for us by satisfying for us and interceding for us; and He had to act with us for God by revealing God to us and teaching us the ways and will of God, and also by powerfully recovering us from the tyranny of sin and evil, and governing and guiding us to full restoration to the image and service of God. These three acts are indispensable to the completeness of His work—essential to its success in any degree; and if in our estimate of that work we omit any one of these, we not only impair our conception of the whole, but we fundamentally depart from the truth concerning His work. The recognition of Christ, therefore, as Prophet, Priest, and King, seems essential to Christianity. On this head Schleiermacher has some just and striking remarks. "If," says he, "of these three functions any one is attributed to the Saviour to the omission of the others, or if any one is wholly excluded, all that is peculiar in Christianity is imperilled. For, suppose one were to vindicate to Christ the prophetic office alone, this would mean that His agency was limited to the teaching and enforcing of a manner of life prescribed before Him or without Him, and of a relation to God founded on something independent of Him; and with this, it is clear, there would be a reducing of all that is peculiarly Christian. In like manner, if the two constructive operations be ascribed to Him, but the prophetic, that of immediately acting on and rousing the intelligence, be excluded, it is impossible to see how, in the absence of the operation of the living word, the kingdom of God can be established otherwise than by some magical process. If, again, the kingly function be excluded, the other two taken together, however closely they unite each redeemed person with the Redeemer, will, because of the want of a commonwealth, introduce only an unhappy and, indeed, unchristian separatism. And, in fine, if the priestly function be overlooked whilst the other two are retained, then the prophetic agency will relate to the kingly alone, and in

that case, if we remain true to the type which lies at the basis, there will disappear all that is properly of religious import. On the other hand, if Christ be represented only as High Priest, it will become almost impossible to evade the magical view of His agency; just as when His kingly office alone is held valid, and when consequently Christ is viewed merely as forming and conducting His Church, the immediate relation of individuals to the Saviour is imperilled, and we are thrown, to say the least, into the sphere of the Romish Church, which makes this relation depend from the Church and those who have the rule therein. Where such a coherence exists," he adds, "there arises a presumption that what is so united constitutes one complete whole."<sup>1</sup>

On these grounds I think it desirable to adhere to this now generally-accredited classification. Some have attempted to go beyond these grounds and to show that the proposed classification is formally announced in Scripture; but in this they have not met with much success. Beyond showing that the Messiah is represented in Scripture as a King, as a Prophet, and as a Priest, in separate passages and in different connections, they have not done anything that can be accepted as supplying Biblical authority for this classification, and this it is obvious, amounts to nothing as a proof that the Bible *directly* authorizes this classification as an expression exhaustive of our Saviour's work on our behalf; for the mere use of these terms in application to Christ no more proves from Scripture that His whole work is summed up in these functions than the application to Him of the term "surety" or "brother" or "witness" would prove that His work was summed up in the functions which these terms express. Of some passages, indeed, it must be admitted that by means of this classification we are enabled to give a felicitous illustration; as, *e.g.*, when Turretine<sup>2</sup> explains the passage, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," thus: "Via ducens, Veritas docens, Vita salvans: Via in Sacerdotio, dum per sanguinem suum viam vobis fecit in cœlum (Heb. x. 10); Veritas in Prophetis, qui verbum Evangelii, quod sola est veritas salutaris, nobis revelat; Vita in Regno, quo nos per efficaciam suam vivificat et protegit; Via in morte,

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubensl.* ii. p. 114, § 102. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Elenct.* ii. p. 426.

Veritas in verbo, Vita in Spiritu;" but it is absurd to say that the passage itself enunciates this; this is rather a meaning put on it than lying simply in it.

But though we distinguish for convenience' sake these three functions of our Lord's mediatorial work, it must be ever borne in mind that these are so united in Christ that in all His actings on our behalf they are conjoined. "Eadem actio," says Turretine, "a tribus simul prodit, quod rei admirabilitatem non parum auget." "The Cross," he goes on to say,—“the Cross of Christ, which is the *Altar of the Priest*, on which He offered Himself as a victim to God, is also the *School of the Prophet*, in which He teaches us the mystery of salvation, whence the gospel is called the word of the Cross, and the *trophy of the King*, in which He triumphed over Principalities and Powers. The gospel is the Law of the Prophet (Isa. ii. 2), the Sceptre of the King (Ps. cx. 2), the Sword of the Priest, by which He pierces to the dividing asunder of even the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. iv. 12), and an altar on which ought to be laid the sacrifice of our faith. Thus the Spirit, which as the Spirit of wisdom is the effect of prophecy, is as the Spirit of consolation the fruit of the priesthood, and as the Spirit of strength and glory is the gift of the King.”<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### I. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

We now proceed to the more particular consideration of our Lord's mediatorial work. We begin with His PRIESTHOOD.

##### (I.) THE PRIESTLY OFFICE.

The Priestly Office of the Redeemer comprises that part of His work which has to do with the restoration of peace

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Elenct.* ii. p. 428, loc. 14, qu. 5.

and amity between God and man. Its end is the procuring of salvation for the sinner by turning away from him the divine displeasure incurred by sin, restoring him to the divine favour, reconciling him to God, and securing his final and complete redemption from all evil. It has thus a twofold object—a *personal* object in the human race, and a *material* object in the sin which man has committed. It aims to benefit the race by the taking away of sin—to save man by cleansing him from all his iniquity.

i. As the Priestly Office of Christ was typified by the priestly office as sustained by men under the previous dispensations, and as the apostle Paul continually illustrates it by a reference to these, it may be of advantage, in the first instance, to cast a brief glance at these.

(i.) Among the Jews the priestly office was sustained by the family of Aaron in the tribe of Levi. Whilst the members of that tribe generally were entrusted with the care of what may be called the more private religious interests of the people, such as the preservation of the sacred books and the exposition of them to the people, to the house of Aaron belonged of right the office of the priesthood and the discharge of the more public or conspicuous duties therewith connected. To this tribe no portion of the land of Canaan was assigned, because the Lord was to be their "inheritance," an arrangement manifestly designed to keep up the impression on the minds of all of the religious and heavenly and privileged character of their position and functions. At their head stood the high priest—a designation which we do not find in the Pentateuch, nor indeed sooner than the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Kings xii. 10), but which describes an office that was in existence from the time of Aaron downwards. In this office the functions of the priesthood culminated; and hence Aaron is called *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, "The Priest." To this, therefore, we confine ourselves at present, the more especially that it is this that the apostle presents to us as containing the type of Christ as the High Priest over the house of God.

(ii.) Of the candidate for this high office it was required that he should be free from every bodily defect or blemish, and that he should succeed to office by hereditary right, as the lineal descendant, in the line of primogeniture, of Aaron,

who was called of God, and whose vocation was held to descend to his heirs. He was inaugurated in his office by a solemn process of purification, investment, and anointing. Having been cleansed with water, as a symbolical token of spiritual purification, he was invested with his robes of office, and thereby inducted to its functions; and he was anointed with fine oil prepared for the purpose, by which was symbolically set forth his consecration to his office and the effusion on him of God's Spirit, whereby he was fitted to discharge its duties.

(iii.) This service is not to be looked upon as if it were a mere ceremonial; it was adapted and designed to teach important spiritual truths to the beholders and to the nation generally. By it the Israelites were "taught that without the entire absence of sin and the positive possession of holiness, as well as the solemn investiture with office by the divine sanction, that would be wanting which was essential to the proper discharge of the office of Mediator between God and man. As they could not, however, imagine for a moment that the high priest, as an individual, was by this washing and anointing made personally holy and sinless,—of which, alas! they had innumerable and glaring instances to the contrary,—they would be naturally led to inquire, 'What meaneth this service?' and the only answer that could be given is that, just as these services made the high priest among them ceremonially holy, so would the great High Priest in His human nature—though taken from among men, 'bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh'—be, by the outpouring upon Him of the Holy Spirit, rendered perfectly holy, and therefore qualified to appear in the presence of God for His people. They would thus be directed to the true High Priest, and have their faith and their hope in Him confirmed."<sup>1</sup>

(iv.) With the same design of teaching spiritual truths by means of outward objects, the official dress of the high priest was carefully prescribed by the law. His ordinary costume consisted of eight different articles, of which four, the כִּתְיָוָה or coat, the מִצְנֶפֶת or mitre, the מְכַנְסִים or covering of the loins, and the אֲבִנִית or girdle, were common to him with the other priests. These were made partly of fine linen, partly of the

<sup>1</sup> *Connection and Harmony*, etc., p. 357, 2nd ed.

most costly materials ; and this was designed to symbolize the combined sanctity and dignity of their office. Besides these, the high priest had, as peculiar to himself, the *מִעֵל*, or robe of the ephod, made entirely of blue, woven throughout, in the making of which neither knife nor needle had been used, and which had on the hem or lower border a row of pomegranates alternating with golden balls; the *חֹשֶׁן* itself, which was to be of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen, and seems to have consisted of two separate pieces, each somewhat resembling a scarf, the one falling down before and the other behind, and joined at the shoulder by the onyx-stone clasps on which were engraven the names of the children of Israel; the *פֶּטִיל*, or breastplate, a large square of the same material as the ephod, and having on it twelve precious stones inscribed with the names and signets of the tribes of Israel; and the *קִרְאֵן*, or crown, on which was a plate of pure gold, bearing the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord."

The Law was thus particular in determining the dress of the high priest, not because the Lord takes any pleasure in the mere outward appearance, but because the whole conspired to present a symbolical representation of the nature and functions of his office. This priest occupied a double official relation; on the one hand a relation to God, on the other to the people. As respects the latter, he appeared as their representative, and as such presented himself on their behalf to God. Now, as they sustained a threefold character, as the people of the covenant, as a royal people, and as a priestly nation, their representative had to appear for them in all these characters. This was symbolized by the threefold division of his costume. By the dress which he had in common with the priests in general the priestly character was denoted; by the ephod and breastplate the kingly character was denoted; and by the Meil, or robe, was indicated the covenant character. The ordinary priestly garments were symbolical of purity and integrity; the *blue* colour of the Meil, or robe, symbolized God's presence with His people and His covenant relation to them,—blue being the Jehovah-colour, so to speak, in the Mosaic symbology, the colour used to remind the Israelites of God's presence among them and relation to them (comp. Num. xv. 37-41).

The perfect integrity of the Meil, which was to be of woven work, and in one piece throughout, was an emblem of the unbroken perfection of that covenant relation of which it was the symbol. The alternate bells and pomegranates on the hem of the Meil were the symbols of the fulness and completeness of the Divine Law on the one hand, and on the other the clearness with which it was announced to the people, the former being betokened by the pomegranates, which were a symbol of God's commandments in their fulness, and the latter by the bells. As the priest stood or moved before the people these bells sounded clear and sweet from amongst the pomegranates, and so reminded the assembled multitude that the priest not only had to keep God's law in its fulness and integrity, but also to announce it—that "the priest's lips were to keep knowledge;" and the people were "to seek the law at his mouth, for he was the messenger of the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. ii. 7). In the ephod and breastplate, again, we have the symbols of ruling and judging; the former being laid on the shoulder to indicate the imposition of rule, whence the Messiah is said to have the "government upon His shoulder;" and the latter being put upon the breast to indicate that from the heart, the seat, according to the Jews, of the reflecting faculties, he must discriminate the good from the evil; and hence it is called the Breastplate of Judgment.

In the head-dress of the high priest the same symbolical representations appear to have been repeated. This part of the high priest's costume consisted of the *mitre*, which was common to all the priests, with this difference, that that of the high priest was larger than that of the others; of the *crown*, with its inscription, "Holiness to the Lord;" and of the *fillet* of blue, with which the crown was bound to the mitre. All these pointed out the high priest as the head of the priestly kingdom,—the representative of the chosen and consecrated people. The inscription on the crown indicated the entire consecration of the people to God, as well as the grand design of the whole priestly institute, viz. to produce holiness mediatorially throughout the nation. In connection with this, it is worthy of notice that the law expressly enjoins this to be "on Aaron's head, that he may bear the iniquity of



the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord" (Ex. xxviii. 38). There was thus evidently taught to the Israelites, on the one hand, that without holiness no man could see the Lord; and, on the other, that without a holy and consecrating mediator neither they nor their offerings could be hallowed before God.

Arrayed in these significant garments,—glorious in his apparel, and sparkling with jewels and gold,—the high priest presented to the Israelites a vivid symbolical representation of the great truths which, in more direct because real exhibition, are set before us in the office of our great High Priest, Christ Jesus. *He* appeared as the representative of the chosen people, with their names upon His shoulder and His breast, and invested with all the honours, and discharging all the duties, of the priestly office. Perfect in holiness, unerring in wisdom, unlimited in power and authority,—the angel of the covenant,—the head of His people,—the King in Sion,—He appeared to redeem unto Himself a peculiar people, purified from their iniquities, and made kings and priests unto God, even the Father. Of Him, in this capacity, the dignity of the high priest, presented in symbolical representation by the threefold arrangement of his dress, was prefigurative. Hence the Jews expected the Messiah to unite in Himself the three dignities with which the high priest, as the representative of the people, was invested. Thus, on Ps. cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner," the Rabbinical book, *Tikkune Sohar* says, referring this to the Messiah, "He is the Crown of the Law, the Crown of the Priesthood, the Crown of the Kingdom." The phraseology here will be best explained by a sentence in the *Pirke Aboth*: "Israel is crowned with three crowns—the Crown of the Law, the Crown of the Priesthood, and the Crown of the Kingdom." These three dignities the high priest's dress set forth, and these three the Jews expect to find in the Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The classical work on the Symbolism of the Mosaic Institute is the *Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus* of Bähr, 2 vols. Fairbairn has drawn from this in his *Typology*.

ii. Turning now to consider more particularly the priesthood of Christ, the first thing that requires to be noticed is the *reality of His priesthood*.

(i.) That in some sense our Lord sustained the priestly office cannot admit of doubt in the minds of those who receive the N. T. as the rule of faith. He is not only expressly and repeatedly called a Priest (*ἱερεύς* = ὁ ἱερὰ ρέζων, the transactor of sacred things, answering in the N. T. to the כֹּהֵן of the Old, a word which means primarily a minister, or one who serves, from כָּנָן, to serve, but is used always in a technical sense, to denote one who ministers before God on behalf of men); He is not only said to be a "Priest for ever" (Heb. v. 6, etc.), "a great Priest over the house of God" (Heb. x. 21), "a merciful and faithful High Priest" (*ἀρχιερεύς*, Heb. ii. 17), "the High Priest of our profession" (Heb. iii. 1), "a High Priest of good things to come" (Heb. ix. 11), "a minister of the sanctuary (*λειτουργὸς τῶν ἁγίων* = officiating priest of the sanctuary), and the true (*i.e.* the heavenly) tabernacle" (see Meyer on Heb. viii. 2), and many other expressions of similar or equivalent import; but a large part of one of the N. T. books, the Epistle to the Hebrews, is set apart expressly to the end of asserting and illustrating the priesthood of the Redeemer.<sup>1</sup> In such a case it ceases to be a question whether Christ is to be viewed as a Priest. The only question that can be discussed is: In *what sense* was He a Priest? Was He such really or only figuratively?

Now, it is clear that our Lord was not a Priest in the same sense as the priests under the law; nor were His functions the same as theirs. He did not belong to the house of Aaron, to which the ancient priesthood exclusively appertained; He was never invested with sacerdotal insignia and honours; He never officiated at the altar in the temple; He never offered up any animal as a sacrifice; He never, so far as we know, discharged any proper priestly function during the whole of His public ministry on earth. In this literal outward sense, then, He was not a priest. Was, then, the priesthood which the N. T. writers so emphatically ascribe to Him a purely figurative one? in other words, Are we to understand the language they employ when they refer to the priestly office and

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Pye Smith's *Four Discourses*, Diss. ii., and Owen on *Hebrews*.

work of Christ as not intended to express any actual fact in His official relation to us, but as a mere rhetorical embellishment, or an accommodation to Jewish modes of thought and usage, for the purpose of disarming prejudice and securing a more favourable reception for the doctrines they had to teach and the cause they were sent forth to advance? There are those who adopt the affirmative here; but such a position cannot be maintained with any show of reason. Not only is such a mode of dealing with the language of the sacred writers incompatible with respect for their moral integrity (for it goes on the presumption that they resorted to a dishonest artifice to secure an advantage to their cause), but it is in itself manifestly absurd. Had the N. T. writers sought to win favour to their system by a disingenuous wrapping up of what they taught in Jewish forms of speech, it is utterly unaccountable that the chief use they make of these borrowed forms is to announce the fact that the time-honoured rites of Judaism had become obsolete and profitless, and that the time had come when they were to be superseded by a new and better system. Was this, we may ask, the way to conciliate prejudice and secure favour? Had the apostles made use of Jewish phraseology, that under it they might covertly introduce their own views whilst they seemed to exalt and magnify the ancient economy, there might be some shadow of plausibility in such a representation as that which we are considering. But when we find them using this phraseology for the purpose of boldly proclaiming that the reign of Judaism was past, that the law as a ceremonial institute had served its purpose and must now be abrogated, that the ancient economy had become as a worn-out garment which must now be laid aside, and its venerable institutions must give place to those of Christianity as the real and permanent system of religious truth and worship; it is simply absurd to say that this method was resorted to merely to disarm Jewish prejudice and induce the Jews to think favourably of Jesus and His religion. Would any one in his senses have written the Epistle to the Hebrews, the great doctrine of which is that the Levitical priesthood and the Levitical sacrifices were no longer of any avail, but must now give place to a better priesthood and better sacrifice, if his reason for resorting to such phraseology was simply to

disarm Jewish prejudice? Such a method was more likely to infuriate than to conciliate, and no one, we may be sure, in possession of his senses would resort to it.

(ii.) When, then, the apostles speak of Jesus as a Priest, common sense and common equity require us to believe that their words have a real significance,—that they are meant to convey the truth that in some real sense He actually sustained the office and discharged the functions of a Priest. And in *what* sense they would have this to be taken we are left in no doubt, especially if we follow the teaching of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The whole drift and tendency of his reasoning goes to show that Jesus Christ sustained really that office which the high priest under the law sustained only typically, and that He really fulfilled those functions which the high priest performed only symbolically and typically. He contrasts the shadowy evanescent character of the ancient priesthood with the substantiality and the perpetuity of the priesthood of Christ; and whilst he asserts, from the reason of the case, the utter inadequacy of the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin, he argues that the sacrifice of Christ was foreshadowed by the shedding of His blood under the ancient economy, gave the ancient sacrifices all their religious worth, and secured that which they only in figure predicted. The view, therefore, which the inspired writer would have us to take of the priesthood of Christ is, that it was the substance and reality of which the Levitical priesthood was only the shadow and type. Accepting this, then, as a guiding truth, it follows that if we would obtain just views of the nature and functions of Christ's priesthood, our proper course is to ascertain the nature and functions of the Jewish priesthood as determined by the Mosaic institute, and to transfer these in their reality and their spiritual import to Jesus Christ. We shall thus see how and in what sense He is a Priest.

Now, the great office of the Jewish priest, especially the high priest, in whom the priesthood culminated and the entire priestly institute had its highest meaning and manifestation, was that of a mediator between God as the Head of the Theocracy, and the nation of Israel as His special people; and the duties he had to discharge consisted principally in his taking upon him the offences of the nation committed against

their Theocratic King, confessing these over the head of a sacrificial victim, offering the blood of that victim before God as present symbolically in the most holy place, thereby procuring the pardon of these offences from the Sovereign, and having obtained this, coming forth as the bearer of God's favour to pronounce a benediction on the people. Outwardly and in relation to Israel as a nation, and as touching their national interests, all this had a real significance and a real effect; the priest really made atonement for theocratic offences, averted the divine wrath incurred by these, and secured the continuance of the divine blessing to the nation. But in a religious point of view all this was but a symbol and a shadow. It was not thus that men then obtained the pardon of sin as a transgression of the law of God as moral Governor of the world. So far as sin was an act of rebellion against the Head of the Theocracy it was obliterated by this ritual, but the moral guilt remained so far as this was concerned. These ceremonies were of avail to set men right with the law of the Theocracy as pertaining to civil status and outward privilege; but as pertaining to the conscience, as respects man's interests and privileges as a subject of God's moral government, they "could not," as the apostle expresses it, "make the comer thereunto perfect," i.e. do for him what he needed to have done to set him right with the law and rule of the great Moral Governor. For this something else was needed; and the religious value of these ceremonies consisted in their adumbrating what this something was. As the high priest was the mediator between God the King of Israel and His people, so is Jesus Christ the Mediator between God the great Moral Governor of the universe and His guilty subjects of the human race; as the high priest took on himself the sins of the people as a people, and transferred them to the sacrificial victim, so Christ—at once the Victim and the Priest—has taken upon Him the sins of men as amenable to God's spiritual law, and has offered up Himself as a sacrifice for them; as the high priest went into the apparent presence of God and offered the blood of the victim before the mercy-seat or propitiatory, thereby making atonement and intercession for the people, so Christ has entered into the real presence of God, and there presented His own blood for us; and as the high priest obtained for the people

the divine favour and blessing in respect of their temporal interests, so has Christ obtained for us God's favour and blessing in respect of our spiritual interests, securing for us eternal redemption, the remission of all our sins, and restoration to an honourable place in the kingdom and family of God. What under the law was set forth in type and symbol is under the gospel to be enjoyed in spirit and in truth.

When the N. T. writers, therefore, speak of Jesus Christ as our Priest, they intimate that the people of God have in Him a Mediator who has taken on Him the guilt of men, has made atonement by sacrifice for that guilt, has gone into the Presence of God as their representative to present there the sacrifice He has offered on their behalf, and has thereby obtained for them blessings, real and spiritual, such as they need.

(iii.) The Priesthood of Christ was thus real; He as a Priest acted for His people, and secured to them the benefits which it is according to the ideal of a priesthood that a priest should secure for his clients. Let us now glance at some of the characteristics of our Lord's priesthood as these are set forth in Scripture.

1. The Priesthood of Christ is of divine authority and appointment. It stands to reason that no being is free to take it upon himself to act as mediator between God and any of His offending creatures. It is only as God is pleased to appoint any one so to act that he can without presumption appear in such a capacity. A self-appointed mediator, or one appointed only by the offending party, instead of meeting and alleviating the evil arising from man's alienation from God, would only increase it by adding fresh guilt to that already accumulated. Hence our Lord's priesthood would have been of no avail had He not received it from God. The apostle accordingly is careful to certify us on this point: "No man," says he, "taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So Christ," he goes on to say, "glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He [did this] who said unto Him, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee; and again, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. v. 4-6). "In these words the author," says Delitzsch, "affirms that He who made not Himself a king, but was anointed King by God, also assumed

not to Himself the dignity (*δόξα*) of High Priest, but solemnly received it from God." He, then, whose prerogative it is to speak in such a case has spoken; He has declared that Jesus is worthy to assume the High-priestly dignity, and is competent to discharge the functions of that office; Him hath He authorized to act as Mediator between God and man; and Him hath He solemnly invested with this lofty and awful office. Jesus Christ then appears as a God-appointed Priest over the house of God.

2. The Priesthood of Christ is peculiar, untransferable, and unchanging. Under the Law there was a succession of priests, and each in his turn was the equal of his predecessor, and no more than his equal. But Christ, as a Priest, stands alone without predecessor, without successor, without equal. In this respect His great type in the old time was Melchizedek, who in his official character—and it is only in that that any one can be a type of Christ—was without father, without mother, who had no beginning of days or end of life (Hcb. vii. 1-3). The Levitical priesthood was essentially different. Succession was the characteristic of the office and the security of the order. Subject to mortality, the priest had in due time to give place to another; and that other succeeded by right of birth. "They were indeed," says the apostle, "many priests, because they were not suffered to remain by reason of death. But this [*i.e.* Jesus Christ], because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Hcb. vii. 23, 24). And again he says, "The law maketh men high priests who have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" (Hcb. vii. 28). Christ was thus constituted sole and perpetual Priest. As in virtue of His being "Father of Eternity" the government is laid for ever on "His shoulders," so in virtue of His immortality He has a perpetual Priesthood. He thus, as Priest, occupies a place of solitary majesty, of unrivalled authority, of unchanging efficiency, of untransferable right.

3. As Christ's Priesthood is perpetual, so the work which as a Priest He performs for men has been done once for all, and needs not to be repeated. Under the ancient dispensation the high priest had to repeat his great propitiatory act

once every year ; so that even had there been no change in the priesthood, there must of necessity have been a continual repetition of the priestly act—a constant renewal of the victim and the sacrifice. But Christ, in fulfilling His sacerdotal functions, has made an offering for sins once for all. When, having died upon the cross as a sacrifice, He revived and entered into the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for us, He did what never can be, what never needs to be, repeated. “Nor yet,” says the apostle, “that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others [rather blood not his own, ἀλλοτρίῳ αἵματι] ; for then must He have suffered often since the foundation of the world.” He was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” “But now once in the end of the world [rather the conjunction of the ages or dispensations, συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων] hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. ix. 25, 26). And again, “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sin ; but this, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 12). By that one sacrifice His work was finished. It possesses an exhaustless efficacy, an imperishable worth. Its power can never pass. Its fragrance can never decay. It remains eternally the same, the one perfect, all-accomplishing act of the great High Priest who is set over the house of God.

4. The Priesthood of Christ is ever operative and efficient. Among the Jews the high priest acted only at intervals and on special occasions ; and had he failed to act at the proper appointed time there was no possibility of repairing the omission. But the great High Priest of the Church is ever, so to speak, at the altar ; not, indeed, repeating His sacrifice, for that cannot be, and needs not to be, but presenting it on our behalf, and so making intercession for us. Hence we can avail ourselves of His aid at all times and under all circumstances. Whenever we approach Him, He stands ready to accept and bless us. No alteration in our case can affect Him or the sufficiency of His intercession. He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through Him,



seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. "His intercession," as Owen remarks, "is the end of His mediatory life; not absolutely or only, but principally. He lives to rule His Church; He lives to subdue His enemies, for He must reign until they are all made His footstool; He lives to give the Holy Spirit in all His blessed effects to believers. But because all these things proceed originally by an emanation of power and grace from God, and are given out into the hand of Christ upon His intercession, that may well be esteemed the principal end of His mediatory life."<sup>1</sup>

Such is the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Priesthood of Christ; such its reality and its characteristic features. We are thus assured of His perfect sufficiency as our Mediator, through whom we may draw nigh unto God. "He," says St. Ambrose, "is our mouth by which we speak to the Father, our eye by which we see the Father, our hand by which we offer to the Father. But for His intercession neither we nor any of the saints could have any dealings with God."<sup>2</sup>

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### (II.) PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS.

The functions of the priestly office consisted in the OFFERING OF SACRIFICE and the MAKING OF INTERCESSION for the people. In both these respects Scripture represents Jesus Christ as discharging priestly functions. Eph. v. 2: "He hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice (*προσφοράν καὶ θυσίαν*) to God for a sweet-smelling savour." Heb. ix. 26: "Now, once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice (*θυσίας*) of Himself." 1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." Col. i. 20: "Having made peace by the blood of the

<sup>1</sup> *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Works, vol. xxii., p. 542.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. viii., *De Isaac et anima*.

cross." Heb. ix. 11, 12: "Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Isa. liii. 12: "He bare the sin of many, and made [will make] intercession for the transgressors." Heb. vii. 25: "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him (*δι' αὐτοῦ*, through His medium), seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

### i. SACRIFICE.

These passages (to which others might be added) place it beyond doubt that in some sense Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for us, and that in some sense He still pursues the sacerdotal function of interceding for us before God. It concerns us to inquire in *what* sense these propositions are to be understood; that so we may have a just apprehension of what Scripture teaches concerning the sacrifice and intercession of Christ; as the acts by which He discharges the functions of a Priest.

The term sacrifice (*θυσία*) has reference to the slaying and offering of animals as a religious rite. This rite has prevailed among all nations, and from the remotest times. There is no period to which history reaches in which we find the rite unknown; and there is no people, except some small and extremely degraded tribes, among whom it has not been found. We are safe to affirm that wherever a people have gods, there, in some form, the sacrificial rite obtains; and even in modern times there are hardly any tribes amongst which it does not subsist except where Christianity or Muhammedanism prevails.<sup>1</sup> A rite so universally prevalent must have had an origin almost commensurate with that of the race, and must possess a significancy which merits some universal spiritual conviction and want in the human breast.

<sup>1</sup> "Man findet eben so wenig ein Volk, das den Göttern nicht Opfer und Gaben dargeboten, als man jemals eins entdeckt hat das gar keine Götter erkannt hätte." Meiners, *Krit. Gesch. der Religionen*, ii. s. 1.

(i.) *The Origin of Sacrifice.*

Respecting the *origin of sacrifice*, it has been made a point by some to contend strenuously for its being of human device. Various interests have induced different writers to advocate this opinion. Writers of the Deistic and Unitarian school have found it favourable to their peculiar views of the work of Christ; the advocates of Popery have laid hold of it as justifying the principle that God may be lawfully worshipped by ceremonies and institutions of human device; while others have found the theory of the human origin of sacrifice agreeable to certain doctrines peculiar to themselves [such, *e.g.*, as Warburton]. The argument on which reliance is chiefly placed by those who advocate this view is that no mention is made in Scripture of the divine institution of sacrifice—an omission which, it is contended, would not have occurred had such been the case. To this it may be replied, That the whole of this argument rests on an unsound assumption, *viz.* that nothing can be held to be of divine institution which is not expressly announced as being so in Scripture. Now to this assumed premiss we can by no means assent. God has in *various* ways conveyed to us the intimation of His will in His word; and whilst in some cases He has explicitly *enacted* what He would have us to believe and to practise, He has in other cases left us to gather His will by induction and inference from various statements of His word. But shall we say that in cases of the latter sort we have *less* His will than in cases of the former sort? And if induction and inference be of equal value with express statement in enabling us to ascertain the *will* of God, shall we say that they are of no value in a question relating to the origin of institutions approved of by God? May not the very fact that an institution is of such a kind that, if God had not appointed it, it never would have existed at all, be reason sufficient for omitting all formal announcement of its divine origin? At any rate, seeing we know not all the reasons that may have led to the omission of any express announcement of the divine origin of sacrifice (supposing the origin of it to have been divine), we cannot attach much weight to this purely negative argument against its divine origin. It may be

remarked, further, that if Scripture nowhere expressly asserts the divine origin of sacrifice, it as little asserts the human origin of it. So far as express assertion, then, is concerned, there is as much for the one view as for the other, that is to say, there is nothing for either; so that we are left to gather by an inductive process, from such sources as are open to us, the conclusion in which we will rest.

The question, then, fairly rises before us, Have we any good grounds for the inference that animal sacrifice is of divine origin? In reply to this the following things deserve to be carefully pondered:—

1. *Reason* constrains us to exclude all other possible sources of such a practice. Let it be kept in mind that what we have to account for is not the occasional or limited practice of sacrifice, its prevalence in certain tribes, in certain parts of the world, or at certain periods, but its *universal* prevalence from the remotest antiquity and among all varieties of the human race. Keeping this in view, it will occur to you as a safe and guiding principle that no such universally prevalent usage can be accounted for except on one of two suppositions: either that it has been dictated by some conviction or necessity common to all mankind, or that it has been presented by some authority to which all mankind in common have felt themselves bound to defer. Besides these two suppositions in such a case, there is no other possible; and what we have now to do is to determine which of them will satisfactorily account for the universal presence of the practice now under consideration.

(1.) Now, with regard to the former hypothesis, it is to be observed that a universal conviction must be founded in the reason of things, and a universal necessity must arise from some of the original appetites or desires of the human mind. We inquire then, first, whether there is anything in the *reason* of the thing to induce a universal conviction among mankind that sacrifice is a proper method of approaching and worshipping the Deity. Here we are asked by the advocates of the human origin of sacrifice to bear in mind the anthropomorphic tendencies of mankind in their notions of God and the service due to Him, and to admit the fact that the earliest tribes of mankind were deeply influenced by the feelings to which such

tendencies give rise. The tendency is admitted—the alleged fact is not admitted; for it has never yet been shown on even the feeblest evidence that the earliest tribes of the race *were* deeply influenced by gross anthropomorphism; whilst, on the contrary, there exists the strongest probability that in proportion as the race approximated its fountainhead, the religious conceptions of mankind were correct and spiritual. But, supposing the fact admitted, what use will our opponents make of it? Suppose the earliest tribes of men believed God to be altogether such an one as themselves, does this furnish any ground for supposing that they would naturally think of seeking His favour by the offering of sacrifice? Would men naturally think of acting so to their fellow-men? Would a son seek the favour of his father, a subject the protection of his sovereign, by taking an innocent creature and killing it and burning it before the party he sought to make propitious to him? Would not men rather naturally recoil from the suggestion of such a thing as more likely to prove offensive to the object of their homage than agreeable? And if so, does not the very supposition that mankind, in the early ages of the world, were under the influence of anthropomorphic notions render improbable the position that they were led by the reason and propriety of the thing to offer sacrifices to the Deity? If they thought God altogether such an one as themselves, how comes it to pass that they were led to seek His favour by methods which they would have recoiled from using in regard to one of themselves?

In reply to this question various suggestions have been offered as hypotheses by way of rationally accounting for the human origin of sacrifices.

a. It has been suggested that sacrifice might have originally been presented as a gift or present to the Deity, and it has been asked whether it might not very naturally occur to man to present of his flocks and herds to God, as a token of acknowledgment of His bounty? To this it may be replied, in the first place, that this is altogether irrelevant, inasmuch as the question relates, not to the offering of gifts, but to the slaying of sacrifices, between which there is no sort of analogy, nor any affinity that might lead to the one growing out of the other; and then, secondly, this is an attempt to remove one

difficulty by suggesting another equally great; for it is just as far from probability that a man should, from the reason of the thing, conclude that the great Being to whom he acknowledged he owed everything would be pleased by his destroying part of what he had received, by laying it on the altar as a present, as it is that He would be pleased by its being destroyed as a sacrifice.

It may also be observed that there is reason to doubt whether the idea of sacrifice is not historically anterior to that of a gift. Gifts can come into existence, and the idea of them into men's minds, only when *property* is possessed. Where there is anything of the nature of a community of goods, there can be no such thing as a giving and receiving, seeing none has a right of property, and consequently a right of gift, in anything more than another. Now in the very earliest ages such a community of goods must have been possessed. In the Adamic family there might be differences of occupation, and each might contribute his share to the common fund; but there is no probability that anything of the nature of property was claimed by any of them in what he produced. We cannot conceive of Abel appropriating his sheep, and Cain his fruits, and the one bartering with the other, or bestowing a portion on the other as a gift. At this early period, then, men could have no experience of gifts or of their effects on men, and hence could not have the idea suggested to them from such experience of procuring the divine favour by a gift. But as sacrifice already was known and practised, the idea of it must have preceded the idea of a gift.<sup>1</sup>

b. Not less valueless is a second suggestion, viz. that

<sup>1</sup> Magee mentions a suggestion of a Dr. Rutherford which seems worthy of notice as to the origin of property. It is that in Gen. iv. 20 we have the account of the introduction of that usage when it is said of Jabal that he was the father of those that dwell in tents, and of מִקְנֵה, which our version renders "such as have cattle," supplying a number of words to make a meaning. But מִקְנֵה means neither cattle simply, nor persons who have cattle; it signifies properly property, and cattle only viewed as property (see Rosenmüller, *in loc.*, and Gesenius, *in verb.*). The statement of Moses, then, is that Jabal was the father of property, i.e. the inventor or originator of property; just as his brother Jubal in the next verse is called the father of all that handle the harp and organ.

sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly meal shared by the Deity with His worshippers. For not only is there nothing in the reason of things to suggest such an idea to the mind, but it seems excluded by the very form in which sacrifice, in its most ancient as well as most solemn and highest form, was presented, viz. in that of a holocaust or whole burnt-offering. Where the *whole* animal was consumed on the altar, it is obvious that the idea of a partition of it between the offerer and his God is excluded.

Apart from this, however, this idea seems so little natural that it would be absurd to trace to it the spontaneous origin of this universal usage. The idea is undoubtedly a *true* one, and we find it to a certain extent recognised in the Mosaic offerings, where the priest, in certain cases, as the mediator between God and the offerer, and who had appeared for the latter, partook of the sacrifice in token of the reconciliation having been effected between God and the worshipper; but the idea, though true, is wholly artificial; it is learned by education and from the sacrificial institute, and can never be regarded as a natural conviction of reason giving spontaneously birth to that act. It may be added, that it leaves wholly unexplained the practice of human sacrifices,—a practice which prevailed most in the earliest periods, and extended through nations the most widely separated from each other; as well as the fact that among some nations the highest of all sacrifices were of animals which either are or were never used as food, such as the horse, which among the Brahmanical worshippers is called the King of Sacrifice, and that some of the most important sacrifices were of the same kind, as that of the wolf to Mars, the ass to Priapus, and the dog to Hecate.<sup>1</sup> These considerations are conclusive against the hypothesis that sacrifice arose out of the idea of a friendly feast between God and the worshipper. When the oldest, the most sacred, and the most solemn sacrifices were such as were either wholly consumed or were of animals which never were eaten, it is absurd to say that the practice could have originated in the idea of a feast.

c. The only other suggestion worth noticing, which has been offered as accounting on grounds of natural reason for the practice of sacrifice, is that of Abraham Sykes,

<sup>1</sup> See Bähr, *Mos. Cult.*, ii. pp. 218, 225.

who in an *Essay on Sacrifice* explains sacrifices as "federal rites," "implying the entering into friendship with God, or the renewal of that friendship when broken by the violation of former stipulations" (p. 59). In accordance with this he suggests that sacrifices had their origin in the fact that eating and drinking together were common and accredited modes of contracting covenants or cementing alliances among the ancients (p. 73). This theory of the origin of sacrifice rests on the assumption of the theory last considered, viz. that the sacrifice was of the nature of a friendly meal shared between God and the worshippers, and is consequently liable to all the objections which may be urged against that. In addition to these, it may be observed that this theory involves a self-contradiction. That persons who had formed a treaty or entered into a covenant were wont to confirm that by eating and drinking together cannot be doubted; but on what ground did they do this? Was it on the ground that the alliance having been already struck they could thus meet as friends? Or was it on the ground that meeting thus as friends they thereby struck the alliance? The former surely is the just view of the case. Previously they were at variance, and could not eat together; now they are at one, and therefore may participate in a friendly meal. This usage, then, did not proceed on the assumption that by it the former variance was healed; but on the assumption that the variance having been healed by some other instrumentality, the parties might unite in acts of friendship. Now, if sacrifice was a federal rite, if it implied the entering into friendship with God on the part of man, then it was the instrumentality by which harmony and reconciliation were effected between God and man. But if this was its character it could not *also* be the meal by which that reunion was celebrated; it could not both occasion the meal and be the meal itself. Sykes's theory is thus inconsistent with itself. It makes sacrifice at once the procuring cause of the feast of reconciliation; and it makes the feast of reconciliation the source and origin of the sacrifice. If there had been no reconciliation there would have been no feast; and there would have been no reconciliation had there been no sacrifice. How was it possible in such circumstances for the feast to originate the sacrifice—the effect to give birth to the cause?



The futility of these hypotheses shows how untenable is the attempt to find the origin of sacrifice in the reason of the thing itself. As little can it be sought for in any natural and universal conviction or felt necessity of the human mind; for there is nothing in the common natural workings or passions of the mind which would of itself suggest such a mode of serving and worshipping God. On the contrary, to the natural reason and heart of man it is rather repugnant than otherwise. This is exemplified in the case of the more intelligent among the ancient heathens, respecting whom Spencer, the ablest opponent perhaps of the divine origin of sacrifice, uses the following striking language: "In truth, so far were the more cultured of the heathen from believing that the sacrifices were in accordance with the nature of their gods, that it not infrequently occurred to them to wonder whence a rite so melancholy and so alien to the nature of the gods came into the minds of men, was so long propagated, and so tenaciously held its place among their customs." *De Leg. Heb.* l. iii. Diss. ii. c. 4, § 2.

(2.) Having thus disposed of the one side of the alternative formerly proposed, we now come to the other. If sacrifices have not their origin in their inherent reasonableness or in any common affection of the human mind, they must have had their origin in some authoritative appointment to which all men in common felt constrained to yield. *a.* We cannot assume such an authority to have resided in any priestly body so as to resolve sacrifices into an invention of priestcraft, because (*a*) sacrifices were known and practised long before the priesthood became a separate profession; they were practised when each individual acted as his own priest, or when at the utmost each father acted as the priest of his own household; so that there was no room for the operation of any priestcraft in the case. (*b*) Any benefit accruing to the priest from the sacrifices brought by the worshippers is so small that we cannot suppose a sufficient inducement to have been found in that to lead to their inventing and inculcating such a usage. And (*c*) supposing some one priest or body of priests had fallen on this invention, that will not account for the *universality* of the practice; it is as difficult to account for all the priests in the world adopting it as it is to account for all the people in the world following it. *b.* But if we

exclude the supposition of priestcraft, we are shut up to the supposition of some common father of the race, such as Adam or Noah, by whom the rite was practised, and from whom it was handed down to all mankind. Historically it is from the latter of these that the rite must be supposed to have had its universal diffusion ; for the descendants of Noah being the heads of all the various tribes and varieties of the human race, any rite solemnly observed by that patriarch, and inculcated by him on his posterity, would be carried by the different portions of mankind in their respective migrations, and become one of the fixed usages of the community. But as the rite was practised in the family of Adam, and as Noah himself derived it from him, we must go back to the very cradle of the human race for the commencement of this practice. From whom, then, did Adam derive it? Only from Him from whom Adam derived everything—from God Himself.<sup>1</sup>

2. In support of the conclusion at which we have arrived we may appeal to the authority of Scripture. It is true that nowhere there is the origin of sacrifice ascribed to God, but there are certain principles laid down and certain facts recorded which lead to the conclusion that this rite was not of human invention, but was one enjoined on man by God. Of these the following may be mentioned:—

(1.) There can be no doubt that God *approved* of this mode of worshipping Him. In reference to the very first sacrifice of which we read, it is stated that God had respect unto it (Gen. iv. 4, 5)—וַיַּשֶׁעַ יְהוָה אֶל-הַבֶּלֶל וְאֶל-מִנְחָתוֹ, where the verb וַיַּשֶׁעַ, “to regard or look on,” followed by the prep. אֶל, has the force of regarding with approval ; “Deus munus Abelis gratum habuit” (Rosenmüller). The next sacrifice of which we read was that of Noah after he came out of the ark ; and of this it is said, “And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour” (Gen. viii. 21), literally, a “savour of acquiescence or approval”—רִיחַ הַנִּיחָה, from נִיחַ, acquiescere in aliqua re, delectari : “Innuit accepta et grata fuisse Noachi sacrificium Deo” (Rosenmüller). It is needless to multiply instances ; nothing can be more certain than that the sacrifices offered

<sup>1</sup> The reasoning by which this conclusion is reached has been presented very forcibly in a condensed form by Dr. Patrick Delaney in his *Revelation examined with Candour*, vol. i. pp. 127-132.

by pious men of old were acceptable to God. Instances also occur at a very early period in the sacred history in which God gives the most direct and indisputable proof of His approval of this mode of worshipping Him by commanding it to be followed, as when He prescribed to Abraham the offering of his son Isaac and provided a substitute for that in the ram which Abraham actually offered, and as when He commanded the friends of Job to offer up for themselves a burnt-offering. Now, the question arises, Is such full approval on the part of God compatible with the supposition that sacrifice was a mere invention of man? Is it not a principle of true religion distinctly recognised in the Bible that it is God who alone has the right to prescribe how He is to be worshipped, and that, consequently, spontaneous contrivances on the part of man to do Him honour are rather presumptuous invasions of His prerogative than grateful acts of homage to Him? The inference from this is, that had sacrifice been a mere human contrivance it would not have been acceptable to God. "It would not," says Hallett, "have been acceptable if it had not been of divine institution; according to that plain, obvious, and eternal maxim of all true religion, Christian, Mosaic, and natural: 'In vain do they worship God, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men' (Mark vii. 7). If there be any truth in this maxim, Abel would have worshipped God in vain; and God would have had no respect to his offering if his sacrificing had been merely a command of his father Adam, or an invention of his own. The divine *acceptance*, therefore, is a demonstration of a divine *institution*."

(2.) It has been suggested, and there is great probability in the suggestion, that sacrifice was instituted by God on the occasion when, after His first interview with man after he had sinned, He took of the skins of animals and converted them into clothing for Adam and his wife. Assuming the propitiatory and typical character of sacrifice, it cannot be denied that the occasion was a *fit* one for inculcating the practice of it on man, inasmuch as God had just given to him the promise of that great Deliverer of whose work on behalf of man animal sacrifices were designed to be the memorial, symbol, and foreshadow. It must also be admitted that, even without assuming the typical nature of sacrifice, the occasion was a

fitting one for appointing it, inasmuch as the sight of an innocent victim bleeding to death on their account was well fitted to awaken in the bosoms of our first parents the liveliest sense of the evil of that disobedience of which they had been convicted by God. Have we any reason, then, to believe that the animals in whose skins Adam and Eve were clothed had been slain in sacrifice by divine appointment? The answer to this is furnished by the impossibility of accounting for their being slain at all on any other hypothesis. For what purpose but this can we conceive that a thing so new and so revolting to the feelings of our first parents could have been done? It was not done to give them food, for as yet animal food was unknown to man. It could not have been done merely to afford clothing to Adam and Eve, for this would have been an unnecessary and cruel waste of animal life, seeing God could have as easily clothed them from the produce of the vegetable world. What supposition, then, more probable than that these animals were slain in sacrifice, that God then and there appointed for man the appropriate memorial and foreshadow of that great sacrifice by which the seed of the woman was in due time to cancel the malignant works of the devil, and that our first parents were wrapped in these skins, not merely for the sake of clothing, but also as in some sort symbolically setting forth that covering which it is the design of sacrifice to afford?

(3.) It is worthy of notice that in the Mosaic institute, whilst there are many injunctions concerning sacrifices, all these relate to the *mode* and *occasion* of the sacrifice, not one to the ordinance itself as something then newly appointed. In every case the law proceeds on the assumption that sacrifice was already known and practised among the Hebrews; and that all that was needed was discretion as to the proper occasions for the offering of sacrifices, the sacrifices proper for each occasion, and the fitting manner in which the rite was to be observed. "When God," says Kimchi, "in the law first treats concerning sacrifices, He does not command the people to offer them. On the contrary, His language is, If a man shall offer at any time a sacrifice, then he shall do this and that." To this particular exordium of the book of Leviticus God has respect when by the mouth of Jeremiah

He says: "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." All the enactments proceed on the assumption that sacrifice as a usage was familiar to the Israelites. It must therefore have come down to them from earlier times. We find in point of fact that it was known and practised by the patriarchs, and that it remounts to the very earliest times in the history of our race. How an institution not suggested by any natural adaptations, not in itself such as human reason would approve, should have come into use at so early a period otherwise than by divine appointment, we may safely defy those who deny this to point out.

(4.) If we assume the divine origin of the sacrificial rite, and suppose that it was made known to Adam by God as soon as that great event which it was designed to commemorate and prefigure was announced, we can at once see how it would become a rite the observance of which should be co-extensive with the race. Adam would enjoin it upon his posterity, and all who did not assume the position of actual apostasy and infidelity, of which Cain set the example, would religiously observe it. The rite would thus be handed down to Noah, from whom again, as the second father of the race, it would be propagated through the world. To this latter statement a distinguished Bampton Lecturer, whose work is devoted to a scientific investigation of the doctrine of the Atonement, has objected on the ground that the supposition of a derivation of sacrificial observances by tradition from Noah is incompatible with the startling diversity of the modes of sacrifice among various nations, and especially with the early prevalence of human sacrifices. "That this tradition," says he, "should reappear in the laborious formality of Brahminical worship, and the sanguinary cruelties of the Aztec system, and the strange atonement which the Athenian provided in the Thargelia, does seem to prove that if the human mind had no power to invent the principle of reconciliation by sacrifice, it exercised an almost boundless privilege of altering and developing the tradition it received."<sup>1</sup> To this it seems sufficient

<sup>1</sup> *The Atoning Work of Christ viewed in Relation to some Current Theories.* By William Thomson, M.A. (now Archbishop of York), Oxford 1853, p. 49.

to reply that the fact that different nations have used the privilege of greatly and variously modifying the original tradition can on no reasonable grounds be held as a proof that they never received that tradition at all, and the fact that they have shown themselves able to do this is no evidence whatever that they possessed the ability to invent, each for itself, a usage that has no ground in natural reason, but which yet, under every modification, is found to be substantially the same among all nations. On the contrary, it seems much more just to say that they must have received the tradition before they could have modified it; and that in suffering such modifications, it only experienced the fate of all traditionary lore, to which it is incident, whilst preserving the fundamental conception, to encounter all sorts of alterations in respect of outward form in passing from country to country or from generation to generation. In fact, there is no usage and no doctrine which has been preserved pure and unaltered when left to the custody of tradition alone; so that, if the objection had any force in it, it might be extended to *all* religious and moral usages, opinions, and ceremonies, and the position be maintained that no common source of traditionary teaching in these respects ever existed. With reference to human sacrifices the same author writes: "Nor can it be maintained that this revolting custom was a late abuse which grew up as the tradition died out among Noah's descendants; for I believe all writers are agreed that human sacrifice is of high antiquity, and was slowly replaced by more merciful rites. But what were the very terms of the covenant with Noah, of that covenant which would be handed down with the supposed tradition of sacrifice even if it did not outlast it? 'At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man.' To account, then, for the ancient practice of slaying human victims, we are asked to suppose that the nations remembered from Noah the precept to offer sacrifice, whilst in the very liturgical acts by which they hoped to please and satisfy the divine power they totally forgot His own most solemn denunciation of the shedding of human blood." These sentences are full of misstatements and fallacies. In the first place, it is

not correct to state that the prohibition to shed human blood formed part, still less an important part, of the covenant made by God with Noah ; it was simply a moral injunction rendered peculiarly necessary in consequence of the permission now granted to man to slay animals for food, and formed no condition or part of the covenant at all. What makes this certain is, that it is not until after the injunction had been given that we find mention made of God's entering into a covenant with Noah ; this forms a distinct part of the narrative, and the language employed in it is such as to show that it was with reference to totally different matters that that transaction took place. Now, it is quite conceivable that the nations might remember the covenant and the rites connected with it, whilst they forgot or did not choose to observe the moral prohibitions given by God to their ancestor. Secondly, it is fallacious to argue that because God forbade the shedding of man's blood, it is impossible to conceive that the nations should come to think they might please and satisfy Him by offering human victims, because the prohibition was not a special prohibition in the case of sacrifices, but a prohibition in general of the taking of human life—a prohibition therefore which, as it admitted of exceptions in the case of war and judicial executions, might be reasonably held to admit of exception in the case of sacrifice. Certain it is that we find the two beliefs harmoniously coexisting in the minds of men ; for among those nations which practised human sacrifices there were none who did not at the same time believe that the gods had forbidden the shedding of man's blood ; a fact which could not have occurred had the position assumed by the Bampton Lecturer been sound. Nay, we may go farther, and say that this very prohibition, instead of deterring men from human sacrifices, was probably the reason which mainly suggested it to them, inasmuch as it was the fence thus placed around human life which made it so precious, and hereby rendered it so valuable as an offering to the gods. Thirdly, it may be admitted that human sacrifices were "of high antiquity," and yet it may also be maintained that this was "a late abuse" of the primitive tradition ; for "high" and "late" are relative terms, and as it is quite possible for the same object to be in space high relatively to one standard

and low relatively to another, so in time the same event may be both early and late according as we measure it from one point or another. So it is in the case before us. Relatively to us the practice of human sacrifice is of high antiquity; but relatively to the age of Noah it may have been of late date. So far as history serves us in this matter, we do not know that it existed till several centuries had elapsed from the age of Noah; and even if its existence be placed at an earlier date than this, it will still remain incompetent to draw any conclusion from the fact until it has been determined at what rate traditional usages of this sort travel towards abuse. So long as we are in uncertainty on this point, so long is it unsafe to say that any given time is too short for any given abuse to have arisen. In fine, it is competent to ask, if human sacrifices were not an abuse of the rite of sacrifice as practised by Noah, to what is their early existence to be attributed? There can be no doubt that Noah would hand down to his posterity the tradition of what he himself religiously practised. Now, of this traditional usage human sacrifice is either an abuse or it is a rite totally distinct in its nature from ordinary animal sacrifice, and having another meaning. But it is not a rite differing in nature and in signification from ordinary animal sacrifice; all history and testimony assure us that it was intended to express in the highest degree the ideas embodied in and adumbrated by that usage. It follows that it must be regarded as a corruption of this usage; for we cannot believe that it is both in nature and signification identical with the usage of animal sacrifice handed down to the descendants of Noah by tradition, and an original independent invention of the nation by whom it was practised. If we suppose the tradition to have existed, we render unnecessary the hypothesis of an independent and simultaneous invention of the rite; if we suppose such an invention, we have to account for the non-preservation by the family of Noah of the most solemn rite of their ancestral worship. It seems impossible to doubt which of these two hypotheses should be adopted as the most probable.

Holding, then, by the conviction that the sacrificial rite was originally of divine origin, we have next to inquire into—



(ii.) *The Meaning and Import of Sacrifice.*

This inquiry is not only of importance in relation to subsequent investigations, but it is imperatively suggested by the conclusions at which we have already arrived ; for if sacrifice was originally instituted by God, it must possess a significance worthy of Him who does nothing in vain.

Now, there are two fields from which we may gather materials to form our induction on this point. Assuming the divine origin of sacrifice, it is easy to conclude that where that rite was practised by men enjoying continual or repeated communications on religious matters from God, the original institution would be preserved in a very different condition as regards conformity to its true idea, than where it was left only to the custody of tradition among those who enjoyed no such divine revelations. Taking this into consideration, we shall best attain the end we have now in view by investigating, as separate topics of inquiry, the import of sacrifice as it was practised among heathens, and the import of sacrifice as it was practised among those who enjoyed divine instruction by revelation—the patriarchs and the Jews. If on prosecuting these as independent inquiries we shall find that there are certain fundamental conceptions common to both parties as to the meaning and import of this rite, we shall thereby have good ground for concluding that in these the true theory of the rite mainly consists.

We shall take first—

1. *The Sacrifices of the Heathen.*

It would lead us into too wide a field, and might perplex rather than instruct, were I to attempt any analysis of the manifold usages of the different heathen nations in respect of sacrifice. It will be sufficient for our present object that I should place briefly before you the principal conclusions to which such an analysis leads, supporting and illustrating each by such instances as may appear best calculated to carry legitimate conviction to the mind.

(1.) In all the heathen sacrifices the idea of *propitiation* is conspicuously and prominently presented. They assume that

man has in some way, either by doing what is wrong or neglecting what is required, offended the gods, and that it is with a view of removing the displeasure thus created that the sacrifice is offered. It would be easy to crowd pages with testimonies from the classical writers in support of this. A few may suffice.

Homer, *Iliad*, ii. 550,—

ἰνέαδ' ἔμιν ταύροις καὶ ἀρνυσὶς ἱλάονται.

[“There do they propitiate her (Athena) with bulls and lambs.”]

Homer, *Iliad*, ix. 496–501, where Phoenix, addressing Achilles, exhorts him to lay aside his implacability by reminding him that

“The gods,  
Altho' more honourable and in power  
And virtue thy superiors, are themselves  
Yet placable ; and if a mortal man  
Offend them by transgression of their laws,  
Libation, incense, sacrifice, and prayer,  
In meekness offered, turn their wrath away.”

COWPER'S TRANSLATION.

Sophocles, in *Antigone*, 1019, 1020,—

καὶ τ' οὐδέχονται θυσιᾶδας λιτὰς ἔστι  
εἰσὶ παρ' ἡμῶν οὐδὲ μηρίων φλόγα.

[“And hence the gods no longer receive prayers offered along with sacrifice by us, nor the flame of burnt-offerings.”]

Horace, *Carm.*, Lib. i. *Od.* 36,—

“Et thure et fidibus juvat  
Placare, et vituli sanguine debito  
Custodes Numidæ Deos,” etc.

*Ibid.* *Serm.*, Lib. ii. *Sat.* 3, 206,—

“Prudens placavi sanguine divos.”

Plautus, *Pænulus*, ii. 41, introduces one saying,—

“Si hercle istuc unquam factum est, tum me Jupiter  
Faciāt, ut semper sacrificem, nunquam litem.”

Macrobius (l. iii. c. 5) explains *litare* by *facto sacrificio placare unum*.”

Porphyrius, *De Abstinencia*, l. ii. § 24,—

“We honour the gods, seeking from them either the averting of evils, or the supply of benefits, because we have been benefited by them, or that we may hap on some advantage, or from an appreciation merely of their excellence of nature; so that if any of the animals is to be sacrificed to them, it is for some of these reasons that we sacrifice it; for what we sacrifice, we sacrifice on account of some one of these.”

It is unnecessary to multiply these testimonies further; the fact is beyond doubt that among the ancient Greeks and Romans the main worth of sacrifice was held to consist in its being the means of averting the divine displeasure, or securing the divine favour and help. They thus brought prominently forward the propitiatory character of sacrifice. We find this also retained even in the Pantheistic systems of the East, Brahmanism, and Parseeism, though, from the Pantheistic character of these systems, the reconciliation effected by sacrifice is necessarily represented as rather of a cosmical than of an ethical character, *i.e.* as consisting rather of the identification of the individual with the Great All of the universe than of the moral harmony of the personal creature with the personal Governor of all. It is also to be observed that even in the case of the Greek and Roman sacrifices it was not the pure idea of a reconciliation between the Deity and man, by the removal of man's sin as such, that was recognised. Idolaters and polytheists as they were, it could not be expected that the religion of these peoples would present so purely spiritual a representation as this. It was in keeping with their system that sin should be looked upon rather as an offence, an insult to the god, than as a moral evil,—as a mischievous and intrusive thing which came between man and God, and the presence of which destroyed that harmony which it was for man's interest to maintain between earth and heaven. Hence their great aim in offering sacrifice was to placate the angry god, to induce him to withdraw some token of his wrath, or to grant some token of his favour. To the conception of a cancelling of guilt as a legal obstacle, or the removal of sin as a moral obstacle, between God and man, they seem never to have attained; nor did they in presenting their sacrifices aim at restoration to legal righteousness or to moral conformity to God. Their sole idea was that the gods were angry and must be appeased,

for which reason they offered them sacrifices as the proper method of propitiation.

(2.) The heathens held that sacrifices served this purpose through their *vicarious* character. In some instances this is expressly stated. Thus among the Athenians it was customary under visitations of the plague to select a human victim,—a youth,—and in order to assuage the calamity to cast him into the sea as a sacrifice to Neptune, saying, “Be our *περίφημα*,” a word which Suidas explains as equivalent to *σωτηρία καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις*, and Hesychius as equivalent to *ἀντίλυτρον ἀντίψυχον*;<sup>1</sup> it is derived from the verb *περιψάω*, which signifies to wipe a thing round so as to cleanse it, as, *e.g.*, in this passage of Aristophanes, Pluto

ἔπειτα καθαρὸν ἡμιτύβιον λαβὼν  
τὰ βλεφάρᾳ περιέψυσεν.<sup>2</sup>

In this case the sacrificed youth was held to have delivered the State from the divine wrath by being offered instead or in the place of the rest. Cæsar, in giving an account of the Druids of Gaul, says, “Those who are afflicted with severe diseases, or who are much exposed to danger and conflict, either immolate or vow that they will immolate men in place of victims (*pro victimis homines immolant*), because, unless the life of man be given for the life of man, they imagine that the majesty of the immortal gods cannot be propitiated.”<sup>3</sup> In this passage the ground on which such sacrifices were offered is explicitly mentioned, and it is affirmed to be that of vicarious substitution. Indeed, we can hardly account for human sacrifices on any other supposition.

Passing from human to animal sacrifices, we may adduce the following express affirmations of their vicarious character. Ovid, in his *Fasti* (l. vi. l. 155 ff.), speaking of a sacrifice which was performed for the recovery of a child, introduces the sacrificer as thus praying,—

“Noctis aves, extis puerilibus, inquit,  
Parcite : pro parvo victima parva cadit,  
Cor pro corde, precor, pro fibris sumite fibras;  
Hanc animam vobis pro meliore damus.”

<sup>1</sup> *ἀντίψυχον*, substitute or ransom for life. Lucian, *Lexiph.* § 10, *χρέματα ἀντίψυχα δίδοναι ἥθειαν*.

<sup>2</sup> Plutus, 728.

<sup>3</sup> *De Bello Gall.* l. vi. c. 16.

In the 5th book of the *Æneid* (l. 483), Virgil, speaking of a sacrifice offered by Entellus after he had nearly killed Dares in a pugilistic encounter, makes him address the goddess Eryx thus,—

“ Hanc tibi, Eryx, meliorem animam pro morte Daretis,  
Persolvo,”

where the phrase “*melior anima*” refers to the life of the victim as substituted for that of Dares. Herodotus has a curious and striking legend concerning Phryxus, son of Athamas, king of Orchomenos in Bœotia. A curse lying on that royal race, in consequence of which the first-born son of each generation must die as a piacular sacrifice, Phryxus was rescued from the doom to which his birth adjudged him just as his father was leading him to the altar by his mother sending a golden-fleeced lamb, given her by Hermes, as his substitute. The ram carried Phryxus and his sister Helle over land and sea, till she at last fell into a part of the sea called, from that event thenceforward, Hellespont, whilst Phryxus reached the distant land of *Æa*, where he sacrificed the ram to Zens Laphystius. The golden fleece he gave to King *Æetes*, who fastened it to an oak and set a sleepless dragon to watch it. It was afterwards recovered by Jason, one of the race of Athamas, and by him brought back to Greece. In this legend one can hardly refrain from tracing a strong resemblance to the account given in Genesis of the offering of Isaac by his father Abraham; and it is probable that some traditionary reminiscence of this may have originated it. When we take into account that Jason means Healer or Saviour (from *ἰάομαι*), there is nothing very extravagant in the hypothesis enunciated by Lasaulx, that Jason and his heroic expedition after the golden fleece may have a higher significancy, and appear like a wondrous foreshadowing of the coming of Him who brought to men the true redemption.

Besides these express assertions of the vicarious efficiency of sacrifices, we may adduce two facts of a general nature which tend to show how this idea pervaded the whole system of ancient heathen sacrifice. *a.* The one of these is the fact that it was the *blood* of the victim in which the expiatory virtue of the rite was supposed to consist. Of this the evidence is ample. Among the ancient Hindus, when an

animal was offered to Shiva, its blood was solemnly borne before the image of the god, and, as it were, given over to him. Among the Persians only the blood was presented to the god, and all the rest of the animal carried away, on the ground, says Strabo, that the god desired the soul of the sacrifice, but nothing more (lib. xv. c. 732). Among the Greeks and Romans the blood of the victim was in part poured upon the altar, in part sprinkled on those standing by; and the expressions, αἷμα τῷ βωμῷ περιχεῖν (Luc. *De Sacr.* i. 3), and αἵμασσειν βωμούς, were equivalent to ἱεροποιεῖν, to sacrifice, which, as Bähr remarks, "could not have been the case had it not been that the blood was the proper sacrifice, i.e. its most essential part, its central point." Among the Romans we find such expressions as "placavi sanguina Divos" (Horace, *Sat.* ii. 3), "sanguine placasti ventos," "sanguine quærendi reditus" (Virg. *Æneid*, ii. 115, 118), etc., continually; and we find also the general phrase "litare sanguinem" as equivalent to sacrificing under propitious omens. Even the word *sancire* is said by Servius (in *Æneid*, xii. 200) to be derived from *sanguis*, as "proprie sanctum aliquid, i.e. consecratum facero fuso sanguine hostiæ, et dictum sanctum quasi sanguine consecratum." Now, why was this? On what principle was the blood selected as that which constituted the essence of the sacrifice? The answer is that it was identified with the ψυχή, the soul or life of the animal, and this was deemed of primary importance, because the sacrifice was an ἀντίψυχον, a soul-ransom, secured by giving soul for soul, life for life. Hence Virgil says,—

"Sanguine quærendi reditus, animaque litandum,"

where the *sanguis* and the *anima* are represented as identical. It may be added that in the words "piare," "piaculum," and "expiare," the idea of vicarious substitution is involved,—

"Men' piacularem oportet fieri ob stultitiam tuam,  
Ut meum tergum stultitiæ tuæ subdas succedaneum."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner (*Æneid*, ix. 349), at least according to the reading found by Servius in his copy, Virgil says,—

"Purpuream vomit ille animam,"

<sup>1</sup> Plautus, *Epidic.* i. 2. 36.

On which Servius remarks: "Secundum eos qui animam sanguinem dicunt." So Philo expressly says (*De Victimis*, p. 839), *ψυχῆς ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐστὶ σπονδὴ τὸ αἷμα*; and in the extract already given from Strabo concerning the Persian sacrifices, it is said that it is the *soul* of the victim which alone the gods desire. By the Greek philosophers it was commonly taught that the blood was the life; and the opinion pervaded all antiquity. Here, then, we have clearly the idea of *substitution* involved; the sacrifice was valid because it was an offering of life for life.

b. The other fact to which we may appeal is that in all sacrifices it was held of good omen when the victim went, or seemed to go, *willingly* to the altar; whilst, on the contrary, if it appeared reluctant, or sought to break away from its leaders, the occurrence was looked upon as unpropitious to the worshipper. In proof of the fact the following citations may suffice: "Observatum est a sacrificantibus ut, si hostia, quæ ad aras duceretur, fuisset vehementius reluctata, ostendissetque se invitam altaribus admoveri, amoveretur: quia invito Deo offerri eam putabant. Quæ autem stetisset oblata, hanc volenti numini dari existimabant hinc noster [Virgilius],—

"Et ductus cornu stabit sacer hircus ad aras"<sup>1</sup>

(Macrob. *Saturn.* iii. 5). This passage is adduced simply to attest the fact; with the reason assigned by Macrobius we have at present nothing to do. Lucan, *Phars.* vii. 165,—

"Admotus Superis discussa fugit ab ara  
Taurus, et Emathios præceps se jecit in agros;  
Nullaque fanestis inventa est victima sacris."

Servius quotes these lines in his note on *Æneid*, ix. 11, and adds: "Quoties victima reluctabatur ostendebat se improbari." Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* viii. 45) says of calves: "Ad aras humeris hominis adlatos non fere litare, sicut nec claudicante nec aliena hostia Deos placari, nec trahente se ab aris." It may suffice

<sup>1</sup> "It has been observed by those offering sacrifice, that if the victim which is led to the altar should prove vehemently reluctant, and should show itself unwilling to be moved to the altar, it should be removed, because they thought it would be offered to an unwilling deity. But when it stood still when presented, they thought that this was given to a willing god, whence Virgil,—

'And the consecrated goat drawn by the horn shall stand at the altar.'"

to add that some of the Fathers attest that in the sacrificing of children in some parts of Africa their cries were restrained by kisses and endearments, "Ne flebilis hostia immoletur" (see Minuc. Fel., *Oct.* xxx.; Tertullian, *Apol.* c. ix.). Of these passages, some not only attest the fact, but assign as a reason for it that it was supposed reluctance on the part of the victim indicated that it was not acceptable to the gods. But this reason is found only in very late writers, and seems rather to be one invented for the purpose than a just and natural exposition of the *rationale* of the opinion so commonly entertained. That opinion seems rather to point to the *substitutionary* character of the sacrifice, and to have arisen from some conviction, more or less clear, that to *force* one living thing to die for another was an act of cruelty which could not but vitiate the whole service. The sentiment of the more ancient period was that put by Sophocles in the mouth of Œdipus when about to triumph,—

ἀρκεῖν γὰρ οἶμαι πάντι μυσίαν μίαν  
ψυχὴν τὰδ' ἐκτίνουσαν, ἣν εὖνους παρῆ.

"For I am of opinion that one soul is sufficient to satisfy in place of multitudes, if it be well affected or willing." With this conviction it is easy to see how the belief would grow up that a reluctant victim was of evil omen. Whether the conviction itself is to be traced to some primeval revelation which made known to man the Great Sacrifice who in due time was voluntarily to give Himself for the sins of the world is a question which will be answered differently according to the views of the inquirer regarding the propitiatory character of Christ's work, and the degree of knowledge possessed by the fathers of the human race on that head.

A different origin has been suggested by Archbishop Thomson in his Bampton Lectures. Following Lasaulx, he thinks that sacrifice originated in the voluntary devotion of individuals for the good of the community, such as Codrus of Athens, Menœceus of Thebes, Publius Decius among the Romans, etc., and that thence the idea arose of the necessary voluntariness of all true sacrifice. But this theory is open to fatal objections: *a.* It proposes to account for a practice

<sup>1</sup> *Œdipus at Colonus*, 498-9.



and opinion universally prevalent among men by reference to facts of casual occurrence and local importance. Such instances are far too rare to give rise to a general conviction, and far too limited in their bearing to create an interest beyond the nations among whom they occurred. *b.* This theory proposes to account by such instances for a practice which was in general and solemn use long before any of these took place. It, in fact, involves the gross fallacy of putting the effect for the cause; for it is much more natural to conclude that these instances of self-devotion for the safety of others arose from the minds of these performers having been habituated to the idea of vicarious suffering by the practice of sacrifice than *vice versa*. At any rate, a fact historically later than a custom can never have originated that custom.

(3.) There is but one more remark to be made respecting the sacrifices of the heathen, and that is, that to a great extent the offering was looked upon as a gift to the gods with which they were gratified, and by which in some sense they were nourished. With this every reader of the classics must be familiar. At the beginning of the *Iliad*, Homer introduces Achilles as exhorting the Greeks on the occasion of the plague to see by what offence they had incensed Apollo,—

εἴτ' ἂρ' ὄγ' εὐχολῆς ἐπιμίμῃσται εἴθ' ἐκατόμβης,

and to see whether they could not appease him by sacrifices,—

αἶ κ' ἴν' πως ἄρνῶν κνίσσης αἰγῶν τε τελείων  
βούλῃσται ἀντιάσας, ἥμιν ἀπὸ λοιγὸν ἀμῦναι.

“What broken vow, what hecatomb unpaid,  
He charges on us, and if soothed with steam  
Of lambs or goats unblemished, he may yet  
Be won to spare us and avert the plague.”

[COWPER'S TRANSLATION.]

Many passages of a similar sort will occur to every one who has read the ancient classics, and the aspect under which they present the act of the sacrificer receives further illustration from the care which was taken to offer to each god such animals as were for any reason believed to be most pleasing to him as sacrifices. Under all this there lies the idea of a gift by which the favour of the god was propitiated.

On comparing these three aspects of sacrifice among the ancient heathens, it is evident that the last two are incompatible with each other. If sacrifice secured the favour of the gods by being a vicarious satisfaction for the transgressor, it could not be efficacious on the ground of being a gift to the gods; and if it was the latter, it could not be the former. As these two views, then, are mutually exclusive of each other, we must presume that they were entertained by different parties or classes; the one by the more rude and ignorant, the other by the more enlightened and refined. This is confirmed by the fact that many of the ancient writers have recorded their disbelief of the notion that the gods received any gratification of a personal or sensual nature from the sacrifices of their worshippers. To what extent, however, the one or the other of these notions prevailed so as to give a predominating character to the heathen doctrine of sacrifices, it is impossible to say. All that we can pronounce on with certainty is that the heathen offered sacrifices with a view of appeasing or propitiating the gods, and that they imagined this to be effected either by their being a vicarious satisfaction for the sinner, or by their being acceptable donations to the gods. Perhaps we may add, that while among the light-hearted Greeks the latter notion prevailed, among the graver and more earnest Romans the former was the more common. In this, as in other things, the Romans showed themselves more conservative of the primitive tradition than the Greeks.

## *2. Patriarchal Sacrifices.*

From the consideration of sacrifice as a rite of heathen worship we pass on to the consideration of the same rite as practised amongst the patriarchs and amongst the Jews, following in both cases the information supplied by the books of Scripture.

In the notices which are given of the sacrifices of the patriarchs little is furnished beyond the mere record of the fact that such and such sacrifices were offered, with the circumstances under which the worshipper offered them. This record, however, is usually sufficiently precise and full to

enable us to gather some idea as to the design with which the sacrifice was offered and the result it was expected to realize.

(1.) Of these patriarchal sacrifices by much the most important is that which was offered by Abel as recorded in Gen. iv. 1-7. Not only is this the first sacrifice on record, but it is the one patriarchal sacrifice of which we know the most as respects its nature and efficacy from the sacred records. On it, therefore, we may with advantage bestow more than a passing notice.

a. The author of Genesis informs us that the two first-born sons of Adam, brought up in habits of useful toil, the one as a husbandman, the other as a keeper of cattle, and accustomed also apparently to religious observances, came on a particular occasion to offer each his *מִנְחָה*, or oblation, to Jehovah. The occasion is described as *מִכֶּיץ יָמִים*, literally, from the end of days, an expression which some regard as intended to describe vaguely the mere consecutiveness of the event to be recorded on the events previously recorded; while others, with less probability, regard it as intimating the end of the year. The LXX. renders by *μεθ' ἡμέρας*, "after days," and the phrase seems merely to intimate that some time elapsed between the event about to be recorded and the one last recorded. According to the usage of the language, when *יָמִים*, "days," is used of a definite period, some adjunct expressing this is added; but when no such adjunct is added, the term simply expresses vaguely a lapse of time. On this occasion Cain and Abel, following a usage probably instituted by Adam, brought each the offering which he thought most worthy of being presented to God, the former of the produce of his fields, the latter of the choicest of his flocks. At first sight the difference in these offerings seems only appropriate to the different occupations of the parties, and yet the result showed that they were not equally approved of the Lord, or rather that whilst the one was approved the other was rejected. "Jehovah," we read, "looked upon," *i.e.* approved and accepted, "Abel and his offering; but on Cain and his offering He did not look." Whether this difference was indicated, as many suppose, by fire coming down and consuming Abel's offering, or, as is more probable, by some

*θεοφάνεια*, or manifestation of Jehovah's presence and approval, matters not to our present object; the important point is that the animal sacrifice was accepted by God and the vegetable offering rejected in some very distinct and unmistakable way. Now, this naturally excites the inquiry, *Why* was this? What was there in Abel's offering that was wanting in Cain's, so as to cause the one to be accepted and the other rejected? Some essential defect there must have been somewhere in Cain's service to lead to such a result, for He who is no respecter of persons would never have made so marked a difference between the two except for some sufficient reason. Now, without indulging in any merely conjectural answer to this inquiry, let us carefully attend to what may be gathered from the narrative itself, and from other parts of Scripture in which this transaction is referred to. And here it is important to keep in mind at the outset that Abel's offering must have been a *sacrificial* offering. Not only is it expressly called by the apostle by the term *θυσία* (Heb. xi. 4), but at this early period, when animal food was not in use, we cannot conceive any reason for the shedding of the blood of an innocent lamb and offering that creature to God except as a propitiatory victim. Here, then, was a very marked and momentous difference between Cain's offering and that of Abel; the one was a mere thank-offering, the other was a propitiatory sacrifice; the one was only an act of homage from an inferior and dependant to his superior and benefactor, the other was a solemn acknowledgment of transgression and method of reconciliation; the one was a virtual assertion of blamelessness, the other was a direct recognition of guilt. It may be that on this essential difference in the character of the offerings and the professions of the offerers depended the opposite reception given to them by God. Abel, as a conscious sinner, came with a sacrifice to plead for pardon; Cain, having no sense of sin, came confident and proud with a thank-offering merely to offer homage. And hence He who has respect unto the humble while He knoweth the proud afar off, and into whose presence no sinner can come with acceptance save under the shelter of propitiatory blood, had respect unto Abel and his offering, while to Cain and his offering He had not respect.

b. This view of the case is strikingly confirmed by two statements of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The one of these is in xi. 4, where the writer says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice (*πλεῖον θυσίαν*) than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Here the writer expressly says that God gave manifest testimony of His acceptance of Abel's offering; that by so doing He attested Abel's righteousness, *i.e.* his acceptance with God; that Abel's offering was a more full sacrifice, more what such a thing should be, than that of Cain; and that it was through faith that he came to offer such an oblation. Here the whole case is presented to us very clearly. Abel was a believer, and worshipped in faith. Conscious of sin, he sought acceptance through sacrifice; whereas Cain seems to have been an unbeliever, and to have taken his stand solely on the ground of natural religion. But here the further inquiry arises, What was that faith through which Abel was led to offer his better sacrifice? Faith has respect to some declaration or testimony or assurance on which it fixes as its object, and when it is the faith of man toward God that is referred to, it can only mean that confidential credit and trust which man gives to something God has promised or declared to him. In all the cases adduced by the apostle in this 11th chapter of the Hebrews this is exemplified as the characteristic of the faith of which he speaks. Noah believed God's declaration that He was about to bring a flood upon the earth, and he showed this by obeying the divine warning and building an ark for the safety of himself and his house. Abraham believed God's assurance that he should become a father of nations, and that his seed should possess the land of Canaan, and so he went out from the settlement of his fathers and journeyed, not knowing whither he went, but assured that God would lead him in a right way. And so of all the rest; their faith was their holding God's word for true, so that they were led to live and act as God had enjoined. We may presume, therefore, that the faith of Abel was of the same sort; and as we know what Abel did in obedience to the divine command, the only question requiring to be answered here is one respecting the declaration or word of God which

Abel believed so as to be led to act as he did. Now, what could this be but that great announcement which God had made to our first parents that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent? This, as we have before seen, was a prediction of the Messiah, and a promise of salvation through Him; and as immediately consequent on the giving of this assurance animals were slain, in the skins of which Adam and Eve were clothed, a fact which, as we have also seen, is best accounted for by the supposition that they were slain in sacrifice which God instructed Adam then first to offer; it hardly admits of a doubt that the faith of Abel, which led him to offer of the firstlings of his flock in sacrifice, was substantially a faith in God's great promise of deliverance through the merits of a suffering and propitiatory Redeemer. In this it would appear Cain had no faith. He did not feel that he needed a mediator or a sacrifice in order to acceptance with God. He held himself a righteous subject of the Most High, to whom, as his superior and ruler, he would offer homage, but from whom he had not to seek pardon or mercy. He took his stand on the ground of his own merits, and offered his oblation in his own name. The consequence was that he was rejected, whilst Abel, who came in the faith of God's promise, and in the recognition of all which that promise implied, both as respected his own state as a sinner and as to the way in which acceptance with God was to be obtained, was accepted, and received from God an attestation that he was righteous.

The other passage in the N. T. to which I have referred as throwing light on the case before us is Heb. xii. 24, "Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here, I take it, the apostle contrasts the sacrifice of Christ with the sacrifice of Abel, and says that the former was better, more effectual, than the latter. To understand, as is often done, the blood of Abel here as the blood of Abel's person shed by Cain, appears to me simply absurd. In no sense whatever could it be said that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel when murdered by his brother. The blood of Abel thus shed spoke nothing good; the cry it uttered was a cry for vengeance. But the blood to which the apostle refers did speak good, else when he says

that the blood of Christ spoke *better* things his words are inappropriate. When we say one thing is better than another, we mean that both are good, but that the one is not so good as the other. The proper contrast of better is not *bad*, but an inferior degree of good. When the apostle, therefore, says that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel, he means that the blood of Abel to which he refers did speak good things, but not so good as the blood of Christ does. The contrast here is manifestly between the two sacrifices—Abel's sacrifice on the one hand and Christ's sacrifice on the other. Both these spoke good things. Abel's was the shadow of good things to come, but Christ's was the reality and substance of these things. The one spoke such tidings as the dawn utters when announcing the approaching day, the other spoke such tidings as the sun utters amidst his meridian splendour when all nature is illuminated by his beams, and nothing is hid from the heat thereof.

A glance at the context will suffice to show that the meaning thus given to the writer's words is in full accordance with the train of his reasoning here. The drift of his reasoning is to show that the Christian dispensation is far superior to those which have preceded it. Now, of such an argument it can form no link to assert that the death of Christ upon the cross speaks better things, is a more precious and beneficial act, than the murder of Abel by his brother. What has this to do with the argument? Blood shed in murder formed no part of the ancient economy any more than of the Christian. But blood shed in sacrifice forms an essential element of both; and it lay altogether in the writer's way to assert that the sacrifices of the former economies, of which Abel's was at the head as the first on record, were inferior to that of Christ. Understood thus all is clear and harmonious; on the other supposition all becomes confused and meaningless.

I regard the apostle here, then, as comparing Abel's *offering* with that of Christ. Now, in order to this, these two offerings must have been viewed by him as of the same kind, however different in degree; else the comparison between them would not hold, things of diverse kinds not being comparable. But if Abel's offering was of the same kind as the offering of Christ, it must have been like that in being pro-

pitiatory, and must have been offered with some knowledge of and some faith in that great propitiation of which it was the shadow and type. This conclusion manifestly confirms the result at which we have previously arrived as to the real cause of the different reception which Abel's oblation met with from that which Cain's met with.

The result thus arrived at is further confirmed by what follows in the narrative of Moses. When Cain saw that his oblation was rejected, instead of being humbled and seeking acceptance in the right way, he became "very wroth, and his countenance fell," i.e. he assumed a sullen, lowering, downlook expression of mortified pride, disappointed expectation, and concealed passion. It is evident from this that he expected that his offering would have procured for him the divine favour; for why else should he have been so offended and enraged when it was rejected? Whilst he thus stood, God condescended to reason with him, for the purpose of explaining to him the reason of the different treatment of the two offerings. "The Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. iv. 6). These words have been differently understood by interpreters. By some they are paraphrased thus: "Be assured that no partiality has been showed by me in this matter. If you do well, you shall be accepted as well as your brother; but if you do not well, if in your very act of worship you do wrong, then sin lies, couching like a wild beast (רֹמֵם) ready to spring on you, at your door; it desires to have you, but do you master it and rule over it." This gives a very good sense, but it may be doubted if the sense thus given is really that which the words were intended to convey; especially is the meaning put on the last part of the passage forced and improbable; for if Cain had already sinned, there would be no need to warn him against sin as ready to attack him; and no one would translate the words of the last clause in the way proposed, except with the view of bringing them into accordance with a preconceived theory. Rejecting this view of the meaning of the passage, it has been proposed by many



eminent expositors and theologians to take the word rendered "sin" in the A. V. (חַטָּאת) in the sense it commonly bears in the writings of Moses, viz. "sin-offering," and to render the passage thus: "If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted; but if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door," i.e. you have within your reach, waiting your use, an animal which you may offer as a sacrifice in expiation of your sin. According to this view God is here setting before Cain two great principles of His moral government as respects the acceptance of His intelligent creatures here, viz. sinless obedience on the one hand, or a propitiatory sacrifice on the other. This is God's alternative for man: Do well and thou shalt be accepted; do not well, then the sin thou hast committed must be expiated, and for that purpose a sin-offering must be presented; and such an offering is at hand, for animals appointed for sacrifice are couching at the door. If this view of the passage be adopted, there can remain no doubt as to the reason of the acceptance of Abel's offering while that of Cain was rejected. The offering of the former was a sacrifice, an offering for sin; the offering of the other was a mere act of homage which implied no acknowledgment of sin, and was accompanied with no cry for pardon.

There is still a third way in which these words may be taken. The word נָסַח, rendered in the A. V. "accepted," means primarily a lifting up, an elevation, and in Gen. xlix. 3 it is used in reference to primogeniture and the pre-eminence in dignity associated therewith. This meaning seems very suitable here, and hence we may translate the passage, "If thou doest well, the pre-eminence [of thy birthright] is with thee; but if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door." The advantage of this is that it gives a simple and clear meaning to the last part of the verse, which has always presented a difficulty to interpreters. But the difficulty vanishes if we adopt the rendering of the first part just given. In that case what God says to Cain is, "Offer a propitiatory sacrifice for sin and all shall be well; thy sin shall be forgiven thee, and thou shalt retain thy pre-eminence over thy brother; his desire shall be to thee, i.e. he shall be subject to thee (comp. Gen. iii. 16), and thou shalt rule over him." This seems on the whole the preferable

rendering; and it equally with the preceding indicates that it was the absence of any sacrificial or expiatory quality in the offering of Cain that caused it to be rejected.

(2.) After this remarkable instance at the very commencement of the history of the race we do not meet with any mention of sacrifice till we come down to the time when Noah came out of the ark. After his deliverance the patriarch, we read, "builded an altar unto Jehovah; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour: and Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," etc. (Gen. viii. 20). Here the only things demanding notice at present are the following:—

a. The oblation offered was exclusively an animal sacrifice. It would not therefore be designed simply as a thank-offering for preservation from the Flood, but must have had some other design.

b. The animals offered were only such as were ritually clean,—a distinction with which Noah was perfectly familiar, for he was ordered to observe it in respect of the animals he took into the ark, and one which is so mentioned as to lead to the conclusion that it was well understood by men from the beginning. Whatever meaning, then, was involved in this, we have to ascribe to the sacrifice as presented by Noah. As to the expression, "*every* clean beast," and "*every* clean fowl," used by the historian, there is no reason why it should not be taken literally, for the number of clean animals was not so great but that one of each might be offered on so important an occasion.

c. The offering was a burnt-offering, as were all the offerings of which we read in patriarchal times. The central idea of this sacrifice was its completeness; it was a whole sacrifice, a holocaust, every part of which was consumed directly in the sacrificial act. Whatever idea, then, is involved in sacrifice may be expected to be symbolized here in its completeness—in its fullest perfection. But the idea of the burnt-offering was that of atonement or expiation, as we read in Lev. xiv. 20, "And the priest shall offer the burnt-offering and the meat-offering upon the altar: and the

priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean." We may presume, therefore, that this great holocaust offered by Noah on his egress from the ark was designed as an offering of atonement for himself and his family, to cover all their sins during their abode in the ark.

d. The offering was acceptable to God. This is figuratively explained by saying that He "smelled a sweet savour," נִיחַיִּים הָיָה. This is rendered by the LXX. *ὁσμὴ, εὐωδίας*, the expression which Paul uses, Eph. v. 2, of the sacrifice of Christ. According to this view of the meaning of the original phrase, נִיחַיִּים is derived from נִיחַ, "acquiescere in aliquare, delectari," "to be pleased with." There seems no ground for the opinion of those who would attach to this the meaning of *placamen, victima piacularis*. The meaning simply is that Jehovah was satisfied with the offering, and graciously accepted it; in consequence of which He resolved to visit the earth with no such curse again as that from which it had just escaped. That the *ground* on which He thus accepted it was its piacular character may be very true; but let us beware lest in our over-anxiety to secure this point we actually endanger it by seeming to force it out of words which do not contain it.

(3.) Passing on to the sacrifices of Abraham and his sons, the only one that need detain us is the memorable offering of his son Isaac. In obedience to the command of God, though doubtless with a grieved and wondering spirit, Abraham consented to offer up as a holocaust his only son, the son of his old age and the heir of his house; and with no less obedience and much submission Isaac, no longer a child, but a grown youth, who might have resisted had he chosen, consented to be sacrificed. Just at the moment when the frightful rite was about to be consummated, the angel of Jehovah arrested the hand of the patriarch, and directed him to a ram caught in the thicket, which he was to take and offer instead of his son. In this very remarkable transaction there was afforded to the patriarch and his seed a striking illustration of the meaning and effect of sacrifice. Isaac was devoted to God, —yielded up to Him, bound and stretched on the altar as a holocaust to Him. But instead of Isaac, God accepts the sacrifice of a ram which He Himself provides, and on the

ground of that remits His claim to Isaac's life. Here, then, was clearly set forth the vicarious efficacy of sacrifice. As the apostle says, the whole was a parable or figure, the design of which was to show how man's forfeited life was to be redeemed by sacrifice. We can hardly doubt that Abraham and his son returned home with a clearer idea than ever of the vicarious and propitiatory meaning of sacrifice. But the question presses itself on us, Was this all they were taught by that remarkable occurrence? Was there not something typical as well as something symbolical here?—something that spoke prophetically of the great sacrifice for the redemption of lost man, doomed to death for sin, as well as something that spoke didactically as to the meaning and use of the sacrificial rite?

a. Bishop Warburton has a long dissertation on this passage in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, lib. vi. § 5, in which he maintains that the whole was a scenic representation vouchsafed to Abraham in compliance with his earnest desire that he might see the salvation of the Lord, and that it is to this our Lord refers when He said to the Jews "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it afar off, and was glad" (John viii. 56). This view the learned and ingenious writer confirms by a reference to the scene of the alleged transaction, called by Moses the land of Moriah, *i.e.* "the land of vision;" to the name given by Abraham to the spot where the sacrifice was arrested, *Jehovah-Jireh*, יהוה יראה, which he proposes to translate as if it were pointed *Jeraeh*, יראה (3 fut. Niphil), "Jehovah shall be seen;" and to the proverbial saying which thence took its rise, "in the mount of the Lord shall it be seen," or as he proposes to render it, "in the mount Jehovah shall be seen." In the main this view appears highly probable, though it is not necessary to adopt all the notions which the Bishop has mixed up with it. Especially must we reject his notion that we have here merely the record of a scenic vision presented to the mind of the patriarch, and not the record of an actual transaction; for nothing seems more indisputably plain than that Moses introduces this as part of the actual historical life of Abraham. It may be doubted also whether the words of our Lord have any reference to this transaction. It is sufficient to believe that Abraham did

enjoy revelations concerning the way of salvation through Christ to justify us in endeavouring to trace some typical connection between this very remarkable transaction and the propitiatory work of our Lord. In proceeding, however, to point out the elements of this connection, the Bishop appears to me to have struck into an entirely erroneous course; in which, however, he is so far from being alone that it may be said to be the common track of expositors on this record. According to this view Isaac was the type of Christ, his being laid on the altar by his father the type of Christ's being given up by God as a sacrifice for sins, whilst by the ram was represented the intermediate sacrifice in the Mosaic economy. It is marvellous that a view so confused and so contradictory could ever have been deliberately embraced, not only by Warburton, but by so many other eminent and acute writers. The objections to it are several and serious. (a) How could the ram be a type of the Mosaic sacrifices? These were themselves types, and it is absurd to speak of the type of a type, even supposing it at all concerned Abraham to receive an adumbrated representation of the economy that was to intervene between his and that of Christ. (b) If Isaac was a type of Christ in this representation, Abraham must represent God the Father. But not only is such a representation unauthorized, but see what confusion it introduces! God *freely* gives His Son as a sacrifice; but Abraham yields his only in obedience to the command of a superior. God gave up His Son, but He did not offer Him as a sacrifice; on the contrary, He *received* the offering of Him; whereas Abraham was to have offered his son unto God. It is God who here gives this type to Abraham; but if Abraham be supposed to represent God, in the type the giver and the receiver are confounded. From these particulars it is most manifest that in this supposed typical representation the symbol, instead of representing, actually contradicts the thing to be shadowed forth. (c) How can what is here recorded of Isaac represent what is true concerning Christ? Christ was actually sacrificed; but Isaac was exempted from being sacrificed. Christ died as a victim substituted for others; Isaac lived because a victim was substituted for him. Can anything be more monstrous than to say that the one of these was

intended to be a type of the other? In this case the proper definition of a type would be, not a representation by resemblance, but a representation by opposites.

b. It is by such modes of parodying the ancient types that the whole subject of typical theology has been brought into disrepute. A very little consideration might, we think, have guided to a much more scriptural, coherent, and instructive explanation of the transaction before us. The following may be offered as the analysis of this viewed as a typical adumbration of Christian truth:—

(a) Isaac is to be viewed as representing the Church of God, the spiritual seed of Abraham. For this we may cite the authority of the apostle's declaration in Rom. ix. 7, 8, where, after quoting the promise to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," he goes on thus, "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." By the children of the promise here Paul means the spiritual people of God, as is evident from his own explanation in Gal. iv. 28, where he says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." What he asserts there as the meaning of the promise to Abraham is that in that promise Isaac stood as the representative of all true believers, the spiritual seed of Abraham: the promise respected not the natural descendants of that patriarch, but those who, like Isaac, were children of promise, heirs through grace—those who, though naturally they could not call Abraham father, were spiritually counted or reckoned to him for a seed. We have thus scriptural authority for calling Isaac the type of the Church of God.

(b) As the life of Isaac was forfeited by divine command, so the life of the Church was forfeited by the divine sentence; and as Abraham was about to slay his son thus doomed, so God was legally, as it were, about to inflict death on the sinful mass of humanity, the Church included.

(c) The life of Isaac was saved by a substitute of God's own providing, and in like manner the Church is saved by that great Substitute which God has provided for it.

(d) As the ram caught in the thicket saved Isaac by becoming his substitute and being offered in his stead, so

Christ saves us by being our substitute and suffering for us. It is the ram, then, and not Isaac, that is in this transaction the type of Christ, "the lamb of God," *i.e.* provided by God, "who taketh away the sins of the world."

Viewed in this way the parallelism between the type and the antitype is direct and continuous. How much of this was seen by Abraham and his son it is impossible for us to say; but we may venture to believe that enough was vouchsafed to make the type a really didactic representation to both of them whereby their faith was strengthened and their hopes confirmed.

(4.) Before passing from the subject of patriarchal sacrifices, it will be proper to advert for a little to those mentioned in the book of Job. The scenery and characters of this book belong to patriarchal times, and there is good reason to believe that it was composed at a period not very much posterior to the times it depicts. We may therefore confidently cite it for the illustration of the opinions, usages, and religious observances of those early times.

*a.* From the statements in the first chapter it appears that Job regularly observed the rites of lustration and sacrifice for the deliverance of his family from the guilt of ungodliness and sin (Job i. 5). With the questions that have arisen as to the proper rendering of some parts of this verse we have at present nothing to do; the only point it concerns us to notice is one on which there is no diversity of judgment, *viz.* that Job presented these sacrifices of whole burnt-offering with a propitiatory intent. He was afraid lest his sons had sinned and had disregarded God in their hearts; and in order to purge them from the guilt of this he regularly offered, as the priest of his house, sacrifices on their behalf.

*b.* At the close of the book we find that Job was also required to act the part of a priest with God on behalf of his three friends. Their conduct and speeches had been displeasing to God, and consequently His wrath was kindled against them, *i.e.* they were held guilty and exposed to divine punishment. Mercifully, however, God Himself comes forward to instruct them how this penalty may be escaped (see Job xlii. 8). It is evident that these sacrifices were to have a propitiatory effect. Job was to act as a priest, and to inter-

cede for them with God; but his intercession was to be preceded by and based on the offering of sacrifice. Here, as in the former case, the effect of the sacrifice was to remove guilt and avert deserved punishment.

From this survey it clearly appears that among the patriarchs sacrifice was recognised as a mode of propitiating God towards man as a sinner. The piacular character of the rite is prominently recognised throughout, and the offerings are of such a kind as to forbid our supposing that any character incompatible with this was at any time acknowledged by the true worshippers of God as belonging to the rite. In the majority of cases this is all that we can gather from the record itself; we have no information either as to the ground on which it was supposed that this propitiatory effect of sacrifice rested, or as to the degree of information possessed by the patriarchs concerning the great transaction to which this rite typically pointed. The only exception is in the case of the sacrifice on the mount in Moriah; here we have the *substitutionary* efficiency of sacrifice clearly brought before the minds of the parties concerned, and probably also the typical significancy of the whole indicated. We may presume that what was thus clearly made known to Abraham would not be concealed from Abel, Noah, Job, and other pious men of these early times; and that they at least knew that in presenting sacrifice as a propitiation for sin, it was on the principle of *substitution* that their act rested for its efficiency. What confirms this conclusion is, that unless we admit this we must regard these eminently pious men as possessing less knowledge as to the meaning of their religious services than, as we have seen, was very extensively possessed by the heathen. As to their knowledge of the great sacrifice to which the animal sacrifices they offered typically pointed, we cannot suppose that it was very full or precise; still, that some such knowledge was conveyed to them we cannot deny without denying the typical reference of sacrifice altogether. Nothing can be more absurd than to maintain that sacrifice was typical of Christ's propitiatory work, and yet deny that it conveyed to those who practised it any correct (however inadequate) knowledge concerning this work; for what is a



type but an acted prophecy — a present object which foreshadows one to come? and is it not a contradiction in terms to call anything a prophecy and yet deny that it foretells; a foreshadow, and yet deny that it shadows forth before? Besides, of what use is a type save to the men who live before the event it predicts? To those who live after that event it is of little value—of no value, indeed, at all, save as the comparison of the shadow with the substance may sometimes help to a fuller apprehension of the nature and worth of the latter: it is by those who did not possess the substance that the benefit of the shadow as a scenic representation of good things to come was to be reaped. But if they did not understand this representation, what better were they for it? If the oracle addressed them in a language they could not comprehend, it might as well have been dumb; and if it was dumb, it was a mere idle superfluity which had better never been there. This seems to justify the conclusion that, assuming the typical character of patriarchal sacrifices, they could not fail to convey to pious and intelligent minds some information of a very precious kind concerning Him who, in the fulness of time, was to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

We shall have occasion to revert to these topics in relation to the sacrifices of the Mosaic Dispensation. This was the immediate successor of the Patriarchal Dispensation, and the legitimate heir of all its religious beliefs and usages. Under both the same God was worshipped, the same blessings sought and obtained, and the same medium of acceptable worship recognised. In studying them, however, we have the advantage in reference to the latter not only of fuller information, but also of a more perfectly developed system of belief and ritual; so that we may arrive at conclusions at once more extensive and more sure than was possible in reference to the former.

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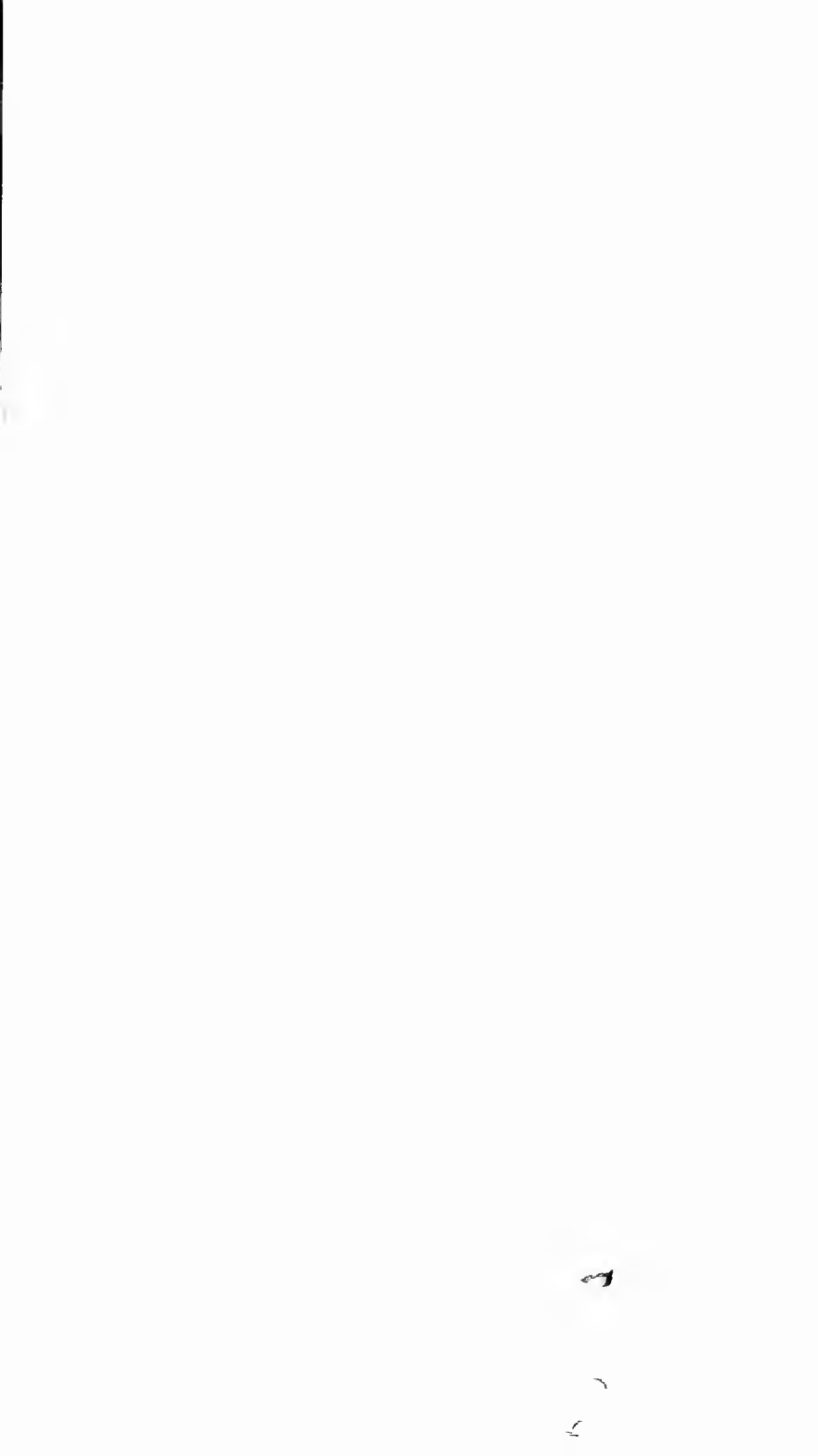
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A SYSTEM OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

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A SYSTEM  
OF  
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

BY THE LATE  
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ETC. ETC.

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## PART III.

### CHRISTOLOGY.



#### CHAPTER XI.

##### SECOND DIVISION.—THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST. (Continued.)

##### 3. *Mosaic Sacrifices.*

THE sacrificial system introduced by Moses among the Jews was the most complete the world has ever seen. Whatever is necessary either for the solemnity or the didactic effect of a ritual, we see here provided for with the utmost care and efficiency. For all kinds of sins the appropriate ablution and sacrifice were appointed, and the most minute instructions given as to the time, place, and manner of their observance. Nothing is omitted that could tend to contribute to the successful operation of such a system; and during the many centuries it continued in operation, nothing seems to have been at any time added to it that did not prove a needless or enfeebling excrescence. Whatever deficiencies in other respects might attach to the Mosaic economy, as a system of ritual and symbolical worship it was perfect.

##### (1.) *Sacrificial Offerings.*

The offerings appointed by Moses were of four kinds,—the burnt-offering, the thank-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering. Of these the last two may be viewed as one, for the difference between them is so slight as to render it difficult to understand why they should have formed

separate institutions.<sup>1</sup> The second, the thank-offering, does not fall within the scope of our present consideration, so that it is only the burnt-offering and the sin-offering to which we have particularly to advert.

a. The burnt-offering consisted in the slaying of a male animal, sometimes a bull of three years old, sometimes a ram or goat of one year old, more rarely a dove or turtle-dove. The peculiarity of this offering was that it was wholly consumed by fire. From this came its name *עֹלָה*, from *עָלָה*, "to ascend," because it all went up in flame and smoke to heaven. It is also called *כָּלִיל* (Deut. xxxiii. 10; Ps. li. 21), a word formed from *כָּל*, *all* or *whole*, to signify that it was entirely consumed as a sacrifice—that no part of it accrued to the priests or was eaten by the worshippers. In the Targum the word *כָּלִיל* is substituted for this with a similar meaning. From this we may arrive at the signification of this offering. "The concept 'whole,'" says Bähr, "constitutes the ground-idea of the burnt-offering. But among the Orientals this concept was a combination of two: the whole is, on the one hand, the general in opposition to the particular; on the other, it is the entire in relation to the deficient; hence in the former reference it is the comprehensive, in the latter the complete. . . . Thus, in virtue of its designation, the burnt-offering unites the idea of the comprehensive and the complete: it is the comprehensive offering as the most

<sup>1</sup> Different opinions as to the reason of the distinction:—

The sin-offering for sins of omission, . . . . .	}	Grotius.
The trespass-offering for sins of commission, . . . . .	}	
The reverse (with equal arbitrariness), . . . . .	}	Michaelis, Warwickes, Jahn, etc.
The sin-offering for sins of ignorance, . . . . .	}	Abenesra.
The trespass-offering for sins of forgetfulness, . . . . .	}	
The sin-offering refers to objective crime, . . . . .	}	
The trespass-offering refers to subjective crime, . . . . .	}	
The man who brought a trespass-offering accused himself in his conscience; the man who brought a sin-offering was convicted of a definite but unconscious offence, . . . . .	}	Wiener.

It seems, on the whole, wiser to conclude with Wiener, in his former edition, that "as none of these attempts is satisfactory, and as in the statements of the law itself nothing is contained that can in any measure conduct us safely to a determination upon the distinction between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, it seems best entirely to renounce making a distinction." Quoted by Dr. Pyle Smith, *Four Discourses*, p. 265.

general, referring to nothing particular or special, but embracing and including in itself whatever the other offerings had in common. [Rosenmüller justly observes on Deut. xxxiii. 10: 'זָבַח: Holocaustum, qua una sacrificii specie comprehenduntur ceteræ omnes.'] Hence it appears as the representation of the Mosaic idea of sacrifice in the general. It is, moreover, the completest offering, inasmuch as in it, representing as it does the idea of sacrifice in the general and on the whole, the entire ceremonial or worship (cultus) is concentrated."<sup>1</sup>

b. The sin-offering, חטאת, and the trespass-offering, עֲוֹנוֹת, were offered for such transgressions as were not punished by the laws of the State,—sins of ignorance, ceremonial impurities, mistakes, and in general all offences, whether detected or not, which brought defilement either on the individual or the nation. These offerings consisted principally of animal victims, which were not, however, wholly consumed on the altar, but parts of which were burned without the gates of the city, and part might be eaten by the priest. As compared with the burnt-offering, these offerings have a more special character and reference; they have to do with sin, and their signification is exhausted in the making atonement for sin.

The sin-offerings were divided into the lesser and the greater. To the former belonged offerings for such offences as a private person sinning through ignorance, or a Nazarite touching a corpse, and such legal purifications as were required in a woman after child-birth, or on the cleansing of a leper. To the latter belong such as were offered when the high priest had committed an offence and thereby brought guilt on the nation, when the whole nation had sinned through ignorance and repented, and on the great Day of Atonement for the high priest and the nation. Of these the last is so important in itself, and so tends to illustrate the whole subject, that we shall dwell on it for a little.

This festival was observed once a year on the tenth day (*i.e.* from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth) of the seventh month Tisri, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles. The law concerning it may be found in Lev. xvi. 1–34, with which may be compared Lev. xxiii. 26–32; Num. xxix. 7–11. It was held as a day of peculiar solemnity,

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolik*, c. ii. 361, 362.

as יִשְׁבֶּת יַעֲבֹתָן, "an high day of rest," as our version gives it. On this occasion the high priest almost exclusively officiated. After he had purified himself by bathing his whole body, and had put on the white linen garments appropriate to the occasion, he slew a bullock and a ram taken from his own possessions, and offered the latter as a burnt-offering, the former as a sin-offering for himself and the rest of the priests. He then took a ram as a burnt-offering and two he-goats as a sin-offering for the people; but of these latter only one was slain, the one on which, after they had cast lots, the lot for Jehovah fell. The other goat was preserved alive unto the Lord, or before the Lord, to make an atonement with Him, and to be sent to "Azazel into the wilderness." As to the meaning of this word "Azazel" much difference of opinion exists. Some think that it designates the place to which the goat was driven; and of these some, as Kimchi, Abenesra, and others among the Rabbis, and Vatablus and Deyling among the moderns, think that it was the name of some place in particular; whilst others, as Bochart, etc., regard it as describing merely any rough, rugged, and desolate locality, from the Arabic *azaz*, or any solitary and remote place, from Arabic *chazal*. According to others, this is the name of the goat itself, from עֵז, a goat, and אָזַל, *abire*, so that the word signifies "the goat to go away": so the Vulgate *hircus emissarius*, and the English Version "scape-goat;" also the Talmud, where it is called שְׂעִיר הַמִּיטָהּ, and several interpreters, ancient and modern. A third opinion is that Azazel is the name of an evil demon, or rather of the devil; this is the view of many of the Rabbins and of Spencer, who has very ably defended it; and it has been embraced by Gesenius, who contends that the LXX. rendering, ἀποπομπαῖος, though commonly taken as favouring the preceding interpretation, is to be understood as signifying the averter or expiator, in which he is probably right; and as consequently favouring this explanation, in which he is undoubtedly wrong. De Wette also inclines to this view, but says, with his usual caudour, that if it be adopted it must be greatly modified so as to suit the system of Hebraism. To all these explanations there are serious objections. Azazel cannot designate a place, because in the text it is discriminated from the place, viz. the wilderness, to which the goat was sent.

It cannot designate the goat itself, because it is expressly said that the goat was sent to Azazel, which therefore denotes something different from the goat. It cannot designate an evil demon or the devil, because had Azazel been a recognised appellation of the evil spirit in the Law, the Jews would not have been at a loss for the explanation of the word, nor would the Targum and the oldest Rabbins have given another explanation of it, to say nothing of the utter opposition of the idea of offering a sacrifice to demons to all the religious conceptions of the Mosaic theology. The true explanation seems to be that suggested by Tholuck (App. 2 to *Commentary on Hebrews*), that עֲזָזֵל is the Pealal form of the verb עָזַל, *removit*, with the extension of the final letter of the penultimate syllable, and the compensating for it by an immutable vowel, like הַעֲזִיזָר for הַעֲזִיזָר: this form is intensive, so that the meaning here would be to "complete removal."<sup>1</sup>

These preliminaries being settled, the high priest slew the bullock of the sin-offering for himself and the rest of the priests, and with the blood of this he entered the holy of holies, having with him also a censer full of burning coals from off the altar, with which he kindled a composition of perfumes, so as to envelop with the smoke the mercy-seat or lid of the ark of the covenant. He then sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat, and round about or before it he sprinkled the blood seven times. He then came out and slew the goat on which the lot for Jehovah had fallen, and with its blood he re-entered the holy of holies, and, as he had done with the blood of the bullock, he sprinkled it on the mercy-seat, and seven times before it. The text makes it clear enough that the high priest entered at least twice into the most holy place during this service; and it is possible he may have entered oftener, because, as Winer remarks, he had to carry a censer of burning coals, and with it to kindle the incense before he sprinkled the mercy-seat for the first

<sup>1</sup> The Pealal is a rare conjugation, but it is recognised by the grammarians as a genuine form of the Hebrew verb. It consists properly in the repetition of the two last radicals of the root form, and is described by Ewald as a strong intensive, and by Gesenius, less correctly, as used of slight motions repeated in quick succession. The Pealal of עָזַל would be regularly עֲזָזֵל; but the ל of the penultimate being cast out, and its place supplied by the immutable vowel אֵ, the word עֲזָזֵל is formed.

time; and it seems probable that as he is said to have gone in for this purpose with his hands full of sweet incense (Lev. xvi. 12), he did not at the same time carry in with him the blood with which to sprinkle the mercy-seat; to which it may be added that in ver. 14 the injunction that "he shall take of the blood of the bullock," etc., appears as announcing a new stage in the procedure of the service. The text itself would thus lead us to conclude that the high priest entered three times into the holy of holies on this memorable day; and it is not improbable that, according to Jewish tradition, he went in a fourth time to fetch out the censer which he had left burning before the mercy-seat. When, therefore, Paul says (Heb. ix. 7) that the high priest went in *ἄπαξ* into the holy of holies, he must be understood not as referring to the day but to the year: he went in only on one occasion in each year, though in order to complete the service on that occasion he had to enter it oftener than once. These services over, the high priest came back to the people, and having laid both his hands on the head of the goat that remained alive, confessed over it the sins of the nation, and laid these on the goat; after which the goat was sent away by means of a person worthy of trust and prepared for the duty into the wilderness. Jewish tradition informs us that in laying the sins of the people on the head of the goat, the high priest used the following formula: "O Lord, Thy people, the house of Israel, hath sinned, done perversely, and transgressed before Thee. I beseech Thee now, O Lord, expiate the sins, perversities, and transgressions in which the house of Israel, Thy people, hath sinned, done perversely, and transgressed before Thee; as it is written in the Law of Moses Thy servant: For in this day he shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you from all your sins, that ye may be pure before Jehovah." As he uttered the word "Jehovah," the priests and the people bowed themselves, and worshipped and said, "Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever;" after which the goat was sent away. (The Rabbis add also that it was taken to a rock about twelve miles from Jerusalem, from the summit of which it was dashed down and destroyed.) Meanwhile the high priest had laid aside the linen garments peculiar to the day, and



assumed his ordinary official clothing. In this he proceeded to offer the rams which had been set apart as burnt-offerings for himself and for the people. Neither the bullock nor the goat of the sin-offering was eaten; but after the usual pieces of fat had been laid on the altar, the rest was burnt without the camp, according to the general rule. The man who conveyed the goat into the wilderness, as well as the man who attended to the burning of the sin-offering, were required before they returned to the camp to wash themselves and their clothes.

c. Such were the regular sacrifices instituted by Moses. Besides these there were occasional sacrifices, and of these there was one so memorable in itself and its consequents that it was celebrated by a yearly festival among the Jews—the sacrifice of the Passover on the night preceding the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. It becomes the more necessary that we should briefly notice this, because the apostle makes special reference to it in connection with the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. “Christ, our Passover,” says he, “has been sacrificed for us,” or “our Passover has been sacrificed, even Christ:” τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός.

Referring you to the narrative of Moses for the facts connected with the institution and observance of this sacrificial offering, I here only briefly note the following things:—

(a) The phrase by which this was denoted. This was פָּסַח, the sacrifice of passing over, where פָּסַח does not denote any sort of passing over, but passing over in the sense of not smiting or destroying, and consequently it stands in antithesis to the מָצַח in the next clause of the verse, where it is said that this passing over of the Israelites took place when Jehovah smote in judgment the Egyptians. Hence Gesenius gives *spare* as the proper force of the word; so that this was the sacrifice of *sparing*, i.e. the sacrifice in virtue of which the Israelites were spared.

(b) This sparing took effect in consequence of the blood of the victim being sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts of the houses. “When I see,” said God, “the blood, I will spare you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt” (Ex. xii. 13). The

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xii. 27 : מִצַּח-פָּסַח הָיָא לְיִהוָה.

sprinkling of the blood was the great sacrificial act, and was that through means of which the Israelites were to be spared and saved from the plague that was to come on the Egyptians. This sprinkling, be it observed, was to be done only this once; in after times, though the lamb was slain and its flesh eaten at the Passover, there was no sprinkling of the blood; and the reason of this was that the first observance alone was of a sacrificial character, the subsequent observances were mere commemorations of the great and memorable event.

(c) This observance stood connected with the deliverance of the Israelites out of the house of bondage. The judgment from which the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb brought them exemption was intended by God to secure, and did secure, their escape from the thralldom in which they had so long been held. On this account they were commanded to observe this feast in the future. "Ye shall observe," said God to them, "this feast, for in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever" (Ex. xii. 14).

The first Passover was thus a symbolical and sacrificial act on the ground of which the Israelites were spared when others were destroyed, and were delivered from bondage, so as to be able to go to the land which God had promised to them.<sup>1</sup>

(d) That this ordinance was of a typical nature, and had reference to the deliverance to be brought by the Messiah, both Jews and Christians believe. In one of the prayers used by the Jews in the present day at the observance of the Passover they say: "The Passover was given for a sign or token by the Lord that He will protect and deliver, pass over and cause to escape, His people on the future Passover," by which they intend the day of the Messiah's advent, which they suppose will be at the time of the Passover. In the N. T. the reference of the paschal lamb to Christ, and of the

<sup>1</sup> The sacrificial character of the Passover has been denied by some. Many of the early Protestants took this ground in order to meet the Romanists, who adduced the Passover as an instance of the repetition of a sacrifice, and as thereby authorizing their professed repetition of the sacrifice of Christ in the mass. But the real answer to this is, that though the first Passover was a sacrificial act, those that followed were not, but were merely commemorative of that, just as the Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice, but the memorial of a sacrifice.

slaying of it to His sacrifice, is distinctly set forth. Not only does the evangelist John assert that the circumstance of His bones not being broken on the cross was providentially brought about in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "A bone of Him shall not be broken"—a statement which would be utterly irrelevant save on the supposition that the injunction given to the Israelites regarding the paschal lamb, no bone of which was to be broken, had a typical and therefore a primary reference to Christ; but the Apostle Paul expressly calls "Christ our Passover," and says that as such He was "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7).

We do not need to resort to any fanciful and far-fetched resemblances between the paschal lamb and Christ in order to establish the typical reference of the former to the latter.

In the meekness, gentleness, innocence, and patient submissiveness of the lamb, we find the fitting type of Him who was the Lamb of God, who was meek and lowly, and gentle and pure, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not, who is described by His apostle as "a Lamb without blemish and without spot," and of whom the prophet wrote that "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7). In the slaying of the lamb and the sprinkling of its blood on the doors of the houses, whereby the Israelites were spared by the destroying angel, there was a foreshadowing of the sufferings of Christ as the substitute for sinners who are spared from the avenging sword of divine justice through that sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to which they are chosen of God (1 Pet. i. 2; comp. also Heb. x. 22, xii. 24). And, in fine, the way in which men become personally advantaged by the sacrifice of Christ was significantly set forth by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb on the door of the house; for, just as the destroying angel would not have passed over any house the inmates of which had neglected to sprinkle the blood on the door, so without a personal application of the blood of Christ, a sprinkling as it were of that blood on ourselves, we cannot enjoy the benefits of His death; His blood has been "shed for the remission of sins," but this will avail no man unless he personally go to Christ, and by faith in

Him bring himself under the shelter and the sprinkling of His blood.

As Israel was the type of the spiritual Church of God, and as the deliverance of Israel out of Egyptian bondage was the type of the deliverance of the people of God out of the bondage of sin and evil, so the slaying of the paschal lamb and the sprinkling of the blood upon the doors of the Israelites were the type of the slaying of Christ the true Paschal Lamb, and the deliverance of His people through faith in His atoning blood. How far this was understood by the Israelites at the time of the exodus, or by their descendants in after times, it is impossible to say; but as they were commanded by God when their children should say to them, "What mean ye by this service?" to say to them, "It is the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses" (Ex. xii. 26, 27), we may believe that the deeper significance of the service was not hid from them.

## (2.) *Mosaic Sacrifices—their Character and Purpose.*

Having considered the Mosaic sacrifices generally, I now proceed to offer some observations bearing more particularly on their character and purpose. And—

a. It is important to observe that they occupied the place of a divine institute, and were to be observed according to divine appointment. This assertion is not rested on the assumed divine origin of the sacrificial rite; let that point be decided as it may, there is room for the assertion that the sacrifices enjoined upon the Jews by Moses were enjoined expressly by divine authority, on either hypothesis. Of this there can be no doubt. Not only did Moses, in all that he enjoined, act simply as the servant of God and His medium of communication with Israel; not only did He introduce all his laws with a "thus spake the Lord unto Moses;" but in the special case of sacrifice it is said by God to the Israelites, "I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Lev. xvii. 11). God, then, appears here as the author and ordainer of the sacrificial rite; and from this flow certain important inferences: (a) If God

ordained and appointed sacrifice to be offered to Him under the law, then the aspect under which the law presented God was not that of a cruel and vindictive sovereign who had to be placated by means of gifts and offerings; but as a compassionate sovereign, who, seeing His subjects brought by their own rebellion under the condemnation of His law, Himself ordained and provided the means by which their guilt might be removed and their doom remitted—a representation which is fully in keeping with the revelation God gave of Himself to Moses when He “proclaimed the name of the Lord,” and said, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” etc., and a representation which establishes a fundamental and abiding distinction between the Mosaic system and all systems which represent God as needing to be soothed, bribed, or propitiated from wrath to leniency, and suppose that sacrifice was the proper method by which that was to be effected. (b) If it was God who appointed sacrifice as a medium of expiating sin, then it is with Him and not with man that reconciliation originates; it is He who takes the initiative in the matter of man’s redemption, and not man who, desiring to return, seeks some acceptable medium by which this may be done; and (c) if it was God who ordained this method of expiation, then the difficulty to be overcome by this expedient was neither one arising from the divine feeling towards man, nor one arising from the feeling of man towards God; for, had it been the former, the method of removing it would not have originated with God; had it been the latter, a scheme originating with God, which man was to follow, would not have been accepted by man. This leaves open the conclusion that the difficulty to be removed was of a legal or judicial nature—a conclusion which cannot on such narrow ground alone be *proved*, but which these considerations prepare the way for our finding probable.

b. The great end to be answered by the sacrificial rite as instituted by Moses was the enabling of man to draw nigh unto God. This appears from the generic term applied to such observances in the Old Testament, קָרָבָן. This term is applied to offerings in general in Lev. i. 2; it is applied to the burnt-offering, Lev. i. 3; to the sin-offering, Lev. iv. 3,

xiv. 23; and to the trespass-offering, Lev. v. 8, vii. 3, etc. In like manner the act of offering is denoted simply by the word הִקְרִיב, the hiphil form of the verb קָרַב, "to bring near;" and in accordance with this, the priest, as the offerer, is called קָרוֹב, "the approacher or near-comer," as in Lev. x. 3, xxi. 17,—an expression for which is used, as designating the same act with it in vers. 21 and 23 of this 21st chapter, the verb נָגַח, "to approach," and which is more fully expressed in Ezek. xlii. 13, where we read: הַכֹּהֲנִים הַקְּרוֹבִים לַיהוָה, "the priests who are approachers to Jehovah." These usages determine the meaning of the word קָרַב; it signifies not merely a gift or offering, but something which brings near unto God. From this it may be inferred that the avowed purpose of sacrifice was to form a medium by which men might draw nigh or approach unto God; and this inference may be confirmed by the language of such a passage as Mic. vi. 6: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?" etc., where the great design of sacrifices is stated to be the enabling the man to come before the Lord. Now, what idea are we to attach to coming before God, to approaching Him, to drawing nigh to Him? All idea of local approximation to God is, of course, excluded by the nature of the case: and, on the same ground, we must equally exclude all idea of mental approximation to Him; for "who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?" The only idea we can attach to such forms of expression is that of acceptance with God, or enjoyment of His favour. As the monarch permits those whom he intends to honour, or whom he is pleased to command, to approach his presence, so God is represented as permitting men to draw nigh to Him when He graciously accepts them and treats them with favour. If, then, the proper medium by which men were taught that they were to draw near to God was the offering of sacrifice, there must have been implied in this that sacrifice effected something towards procuring the divine favour for man,—that it was that without which the divine favour or acceptance could not be obtained. And when man is viewed as a sinner, and when it is considered that it is his sin which constitutes the main obstacle in the way of his acceptance with God, it follows that

that which procures him acceptance, or is the medium of acceptance, must have an effect in the way of cancelling guilt, of covering or removing sin.

c. This brings us to remark that these Mosaic sacrifices had all to do with sin. With respect to the sin-offering and the trespass-offering this is evident from the very names they bear, as well as from the whole tenor of the laws regarding them; and with respect to the burnt-offering it may suffice to adduce such a passage as Lev. i. 4, where we read that the offerer is to "put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him," compared with Lev. xiv. 20, etc., to satisfy us that this offering was also an offering for sin. Indeed, the whole system of sacrifice has respect to sin, and assumes on the one hand its existence, and on the other the necessity of removing, covering, or cancelling it, ere the sinner can be accepted of God.

d. The effect of the sacrifice in relation to sin was to expiate it, or to make propitiation on account of it. This is placed beyond any doubt by the frequent use of the words translated "atone" and "atonement" in connection with the design or effect of sacrifice, and from such a declaration as that of Jehovah in Lev. xvii. 11, where He says that He had given it to them on the altar to make atonement for their souls. The word rendered "atonement" here is כִּפּוּר, which is the standing technical expression for the effect and purpose of sacrifice in the Mosaic code. It comes from the root כָּפַר, "to cover," the Piel form of which, כִּפֵּר, is constantly used of the covering of sin, i.e. the expiating of an offence so as to free the party who has committed it from guilt [see Gesenius, *in verb.*]. "According to the ground-meaning," says Bähr, "nothing else can be intended by the idea of *atonement* than the covering of that which God cannot suffer to show itself in His presence; what is covered is no longer visible, and hence is as good as dissipated, as no longer there. Consequently, according to the Hebrew usage, to cover is equivalent to—to remove, take away, annihilate. . . . By the atonement, therefore, that which was opposed to God, which was contrary to Him, which hindered union and fellowship with Him, was removed, obliterated, annihilated."<sup>1</sup> This is the fundamental

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolik*, p. 202.

idea of all sacrifice as prescribed by Moses; and it was to give prominence and vividness to this idea that the priest was required in certain cases to eat of the sin-offering, as a symbol of the reconciliation that had been effected between Jehovah and the people as represented by the priest.<sup>1</sup>

But here a question occurs. Admitting that the Mosaic sacrifices had reference to sin, and were offered to expiate sin, were sins of *all* kinds included under those to which they had respect, or were they limited in their effect to sins of a certain class? Now, in reference to the point thus brought before us, it may be remarked in the outset that all are agreed that for sins of a presumptuous and audacious kind sacrifice was not available. Sins such as murder, idolatry, and indeed all sins committed with premeditation or from malice, were expressly excluded from the benefit of sacrificial expiation; and the reason of this seems to have been that such sins were of the nature of treason against the theocracy, and could not have been forgiven on the offering of sacrifice without endangering the stability of the theocratical institute viewed as a civil polity. Discounting these sins, however, it still remains to inquire whether sacrifice had respect to all others that those living under the Mosaic institute might commit; and here opposite sides have been taken by different inquirers. Two eminent writers, one in this country and one in Germany,—Davison in his *Discourses on Prophecy* and his work on *Primitive Sacrifice*, and Bähr in his *Mosaisches Cultus*,—have contended that only sins of a theocratic kind, *i.e.* only ceremonial defilements or disabilities, were contemplated in the sacrifices prescribed under the law. On the other hand, it has been contended that all offences, moral no less than ceremonial, with the exception above admitted, were included in the class of

<sup>1</sup> See Lev. vi. 26, x. 17; Russell, *On the Covenants*, p. 395. Tholuck (Beil. 3, *Hebræer. Br.*, p. 71) has advanced the opinion that the burnt-offering was not propitiatory, on the ground that it is not said to atone, but only to be pleasing to God. But this is a mistake, as not only Lev. i. 4 (which Tholuck admits), but also Lev. xiv. 20, sufficiently show. By the Jews the expiatory character of the burnt-offering was fully recognised. In the Targum of Jonathan on Num. xxviii. 4, after the words, "the one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning," the Targum adds, "for expiating the sins of the night." And one of the Rabbinical writers says expressly, "The holocaust expiates the sins of Israel" (*Tanchuma*, lii. 4).



objects on account of which sacrifice was offered. To this latter opinion two reasons induce us to incline. In the first place, the distinction assumed between a ceremonial offence and a moral one is a distinction which cannot be substantiated or carried out. From the peculiar constitution under which the Jews lived all offences possessed a double character; they were at once offences against the theocracy and offences against morality. No offence could be committed that was purely moral; and none could be committed that was purely theocratic. A neglect of some prescribed ritual, or a contraction of ceremonial uncleanness through inadvertence, was also a moral defect, because it was what *ought not* to have been; and even in regard to those legal defilements and disqualifications which arose from natural or accidental causes over which the party had no control, they had still a moral aspect, inasmuch as it was in consequence of sin somewhere that such sources of evil had been opened in our world. On the other hand, the breach of any moral law was also a theocratic offence, because the theocratic institute incorporated the moral law as part and parcel of it, and it was impossible for God, as the Head of the theocracy, to pass over an act which, as moral Governor of the universe, He stood pledged to punish. All offences, then, for which sacrifices were provided under the law possessed a twofold character; they were at once moral and ceremonial—moral under one aspect, ceremonial under another. It follows that every theory which proceeds on the assumption that some were moral but not ceremonial, and others ceremonial but not moral, must be fallacious. In the second place, the law makes no such limitation as Davison and Bähr contend for; but, on the contrary, very distinctly states that sacrifice is to be offered for *all* kinds of sin not of a presumptuous character. Thus we read, Lev. iv. 2: "If a soul shall sin through ignorance against *any* of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against them," which is the general heading, so to speak, of the section, what follows being a detailed statement of what sacrifices are to be offered in special cases; so that the general drift of the law here is that any and all sins committed through ignorance may be expiated by sacrifice. So also in the law for the services of the Day of Atonement it

is expressly stated that "on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from *all* your sins" (Lev. xvi. 30); and again, "And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for *all* their sins, once a year." It is impossible for legislation to be more explicit than this; nor can we conceive that in the face of this any Israelite could have supposed that these expiatory sacrifices were of avail only for one, and that by much the smallest class of offences. We find, moreover, that offences which all will agree possess a moral character, such as false swearing, detaining the property of another obtained by violence or fraud, are expressly declared to be expiable by sacrifice, provided the guilty party confess his sin and make due restitution to the party he has injured (Lev. vi. 1-6); and, indeed, in this whole context we find moral offences and ceremonial offences so mingled together that it is evident the law contemplated them, for the purposes of sacrifice, as standing on exactly the same level. Davison, indeed, says that the instances of moral offence here specified are to be viewed as exceptions to the general rule; but in making this remark he forgets that the rule is not yet established,—that we are only inquiring whether there ever existed such a rule, and that consequently it is utterly incompetent for him to *assume* the existence of the rule in order to get rid of evidence adduced to show that such a rule did not exist. If it be asked why these moral offences are specified and not others, the reason is probably that suggested by Outram, that as they were offences not capable of being brought home to the offender by the evidence of others, it was for the interest of the State, as well as for the good of the parties, that they should be encouraged by a special invitation and offer of pardon to make confession and restitution with the offering of sacrifice (*De Sacrificiis*, lib. i. c. 13, § 3).

On these accounts we must admit that all offences, excepting such as were of a presumptuous kind, were included among those for which the sin-offering or trespass-offering might be offered as a propitiation. But here it may be asked, What was the actual effect of these atoning sacrifices? Did they suffice to cancel the moral guilt of the sinner, so that his conscience was freed from all burden before God? To

this we must answer in the negative, both because of the repeated declarations in the O. T. itself of the inefficacy of mere sacrifice to remove the moral obstacle which sin placed between God and the sinner, and because of the express declarations of the apostle that "the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin," that the sacrifices offered oftentimes by the priests under the law can never take away sins, and that the gifts and sacrifices offered under the law could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Such statements preclude all attempts to maintain that sin as a moral offence might be expiated by sacrifice under the Mosaic dispensation; and with this natural reason coincides, for all must feel the very idea that the sins of an intelligent and accountable being might be legally cancelled by the death of an irrational animal to be incongruous and incredible.<sup>1</sup>

But if sacrifice was incompetent to cancel the moral guilt of sin, what is meant, it may be asked, by asserting that moral as well as theocratic offences were included in the propitiatory effect of sacrifice? The answer to this is supplied by advert- ing to the twofold aspect, already hinted at, under which all transgressions were contemplated under the Mosaic code. According to it, every offence was both a moral evil and a theocratic transgression. Now, for the former of these the institute of Moses, as such, provided no direct remedy or propitiation; it was a purely ceremonial institute, and as such looked at things only on their ceremonial side; the moral aspect of things it had to do with only in a shadowy and symbolical way. But for every offence under its theocratical aspect, excepting those committed *רָפוּהוּ בְּכָפֶר*, i.e. rebelliously and presumptuously, an atonement was provided, by the offering of which the transgressor became exempted from all the theocratic penalties he had incurred by his offences. It is thus alike true that *all* offences, ceremonial as well as moral, committed inadvertently or without deliberate intention to revolt against God, might be atoned for by sacrifice, and that the atonement covered only the offence under its theocratic aspect, leaving it under its moral aspect wholly untouched.

<sup>1</sup> "Ne in victimis quidem, licet optimæ sint anroque præfulgant, Deorum est honor, sed pia ac recta voluntate venerantium." Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, i. 6. 3.

It may tend to place this matter in a clearer light if we consider sins committed by an Israelite as capable of being viewed and dealt with under three distinct aspects: (*a*) as civil offences; (*b*) as theocratic offences; and (*c*) as moral offences. Now, in relation to sacrifice as a propitiatory instrument, these three classes or kinds of sins stood thus: With sin as a civil offence sacrifice had nothing whatever to do; whether the party who had committed such an offence offered sacrifice or not, the civil penalty due to his offence had still to be endured, death if it was death, banishment if it was banishment, restitution or mutilation if the *lex talionis* came into operation in his case. With sin as a theocratic offence sacrifice had to do in the way of procuring for such offences as were expiable the remission of all theocratic penalties incurred by those who had committed them; and with regard to sin as a moral offence, sacrifice had to do, not directly or immediately, but only mediately and symbolically. When, therefore, a man contracted guilt by an expiable offence, he could by offering sacrifice exempt himself from theocratic penalties, but his civil liabilities still remained; nor could he exempt himself from moral guilt save by means which the sacrifice might adumbrate to him, but could not directly furnish. Its use in this latter respect there will be occasion for our investigating more particularly afterwards. At present I content myself with having placed it before you in what seems its true light as a propitiatory institute. I proceed to remark,—

c. That the Mosaic sacrifices were expiatory by being vicarious or substitutionary; in other words, the sacrifice of the victim availed for the sinner by being accepted instead of his suffering. In support of this we may observe—

(*a*) In the case of detected murder the law prescribed death as the penalty, and in the case of simple homicide the same penalty was incurred, unless the party made his escape to one of the cities of refuge and abode there; and in both cases the Israelites are solemnly forbidden to accept any satisfaction, because the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein but by the blood of him that shed it. Here the principle of blood for blood is imperatively laid down. But, supposing the murderer or manslayer could not be dis-

covered—supposing a body found bearing tokens of having been slain by violence, but of the slayer of which no traces could be found, what was to be done? How in that case was the land to be cleansed of blood? For this the law made special provision. The guilt was to be imputed to the city next to the place where the body was discovered, and from this guilt it was to be freed by the elders of the city taking a young heifer, striking off its head in a desolate and uncultivated valley, and, in the presence of the priests of the Lord, washing their hands over the heifer, declaring their innocence of the murder and ignorance of the murderer, and praying to God that He would be merciful to them and lay not the blood to their charge. By doing this it is said “the blood shall be forgiven them” (Deut. xxi. 1–8). Now, in this transaction we have a clear recognition of the principle of expiation by substitution. The guilt of blood lay on some one unknown; it was transferred from him to the nearest city; and it was transferred from it to the sacrificial victim, as was symbolically indicated by the elders of the city washing their hands over its body; and with it the guilt remained in the outcast place where it lay, while by its being substituted for the city the guilt imputed to the city was expiated and cancelled.

(b) We have a similar illustration of the principle of expiation through substitution in the case of the ceremonial on the great Day of Atonement, when the high priest laid both his hands on the head of the live goat and “confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,” thereby “putting them upon the head of the goat;” after which the animal was sent away to Azazel into the wilderness. Here was a distinct case of transference, so to speak, of sin from the people to the animal; and by the latter bearing away their iniquity to a place not inhabited and to utter removal, was indicated the perpetual and complete deliverance of the people from the guilt of sin. But it may be said, What has this to do with sacrifice? I reply that it was not until propitiation had been made by the sacrifice of the other goat that sin was thus laid on the head of the scape-goat. The two, in fact, were for the more complete representation of the symbol

treated as forming one whole. The sacrificed goat could not scenically represent to the view of the people the carrying away of their sin; the scape-goat could not represent the dying of their substitute for them: but taken both together they between them completed the representation, and showed the people that their national sins had been carried away by a sacrificial substitute.

(c) In all cases where the hands were laid on the head of the victim, and sin confessed over him, the same truth was symbolically represented. "This imposition of hands," says Rabbi Levi Ben Gerson on Ex. xxix. 10, "was intended to show that their sins were removed from them and transferred in a manner to the animal." Hence the animal was regarded as, in consequence of that, polluted, and its body had to be carried out of the camp and burned. This pollution also extended partially to the parties employed in conveying the animal thus laden with sin out of the camp; so that they had to undergo a purification before they could again mingle with the congregation. In all this there was a constant and vivid presentation of the idea of substitution as the ground on which expiation by sacrifice was effected.

(d) The word used to indicate the offering of a sacrifice for sin is נָסַף, the Piel of נָסַף. Now, the primary meaning of נָסַף is "to make good a loss, to give satisfaction for an injury" (see Gen. xxxi. 39); and from this it came to signify to atone or expiate, by carrying with it the idea of the sacrifice being, in a manner, an equivalent for the suffering of the sinner, by which the loss sustained by law through his escape from the penalty he had deserved was made good.

(e) The most decisive evidence on this point is furnished by Lev. xvii. 11, where, in forbidding the eating of blood, God says, "For the soul or life (נַפְשׁוֹ) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to atone for your souls: for the blood atones through the soul." Here we have distinctly stated the design of the sacrificial rite—to atone for their souls; the instrument of that atonement—the blood; and the ground of this, viz. that the soul was in the blood. In this representation the idea of atonement by substitution is most clearly brought forward. The blood atones

for man's soul, because in the blood is the soul : what can be more plain than that what is here taught is that sacrifice atones for sin on the ground that life is given for life, soul for soul ?

In adopting this view, however, we must beware of enumbering it with the notion that the propitiatory act lay in the presentation or sprinkling of the blood. That was rather the symbol of the divine acceptance of the sacrifice. The *rationale* of the transaction seems to have been this. The blood, in which was the soul or life of the animal, represented the soul of the offerer doomed to death for sin ; the shedding of this, and the infliction of death thereby, betokened the endurance by his proxy of the penalty which the man had deserved ; and the blood or soul after that, being now pure, might be carried into the presence of God, where the sprinkling of it before Him indicated the dedication of the soul now free from sin to Him. This leads us to remark—

(*f*) That the sacrifice expiated for the sinner by being his representative as well as his substitute. For this reason it was especially prescribed that what he offered should be *his own*. It thus represented himself ; when it was put to death this represented his death, and when its blood was offered to God this represented his offering of himself unto God as wholly dedicated to Him. Man, the sinner, thus satisfied the law he had broken in his representation, and so was freed from all the theocratic penalties he had incurred.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### 4. *Theories of Sacrifice.*

When we compare the characteristics of the Mosaic Sacrifices with what we previously found to distinguish the Heathen and Patriarchal Sacrifices, we perceive one great conception common to them all, viz. that man as a transgressor finds acceptance with the Deity through an expiation

effected by the substitution for him of a sacrificial victim, and the offering of its life in place of his. In this common element, then, we find the fundamental idea of sacrifice, and it will be wise in us to keep firm hold of this in all our subsequent investigations.

The first use to which we may put the knowledge we have thus acquired is to test the accuracy and validity of certain theories of sacrifice which have been propounded by inquirers.

(1.) We may at once, on the ground of what we have ascertained, set aside the notion that sacrifice was of value as a *gift or present* offered to the Deity whereby He is placated and induced to revoke His wrath against the worshipper, or to confer on him some favour. This is the hypothesis of mere ignorance and superstition, and is repudiated at once by reason and Scripture. It was a notion, however, that widely prevailed among the heathen, though by many of the more thoughtful of them its inherent absurdity was perceived and exposed. There would even seem to be something in our fallen nature which prompts such unworthy conceptions of God, and of the way in which His favour is to be secured; for how often is religion made to consist of a sort of offering to the Deity of something in virtue of which He is expected to confer a favour on the offerer? That such a belief prevailed among the Jews, who offered sacrifices in Old Testament times, is shown by such passages as Isa. i. 11 and Ps. l. 7-13, which so clearly show that, while this false and superstitious belief prevailed, it is to be repudiated as false and profane, that we need not any longer delay upon it.

(2.) A second opinion regarding sacrifice is that there was an actual *transference of sin* from the sinner to the sacrificial victim when the former laid his hand on the head of the latter. That this opinion prevailed among the ancient Jews is indicated by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who contends that it was not possible, in the nature of things, that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sins. Among modern Jews this is the common view taken of the meaning of sacrifice. In offering sacrifice they are accustomed to use the following form of deprecation: "I beseech thee, O Lord! I have sinned, I have been rebellious, I have acted perversely, I have done this or that, but now I repent that I have sinned:



let this, then, be my expiation." And among the rabbinical writers we find such explanations of sacrifice as the following: "It was just that his blood [that of the sinner] should be shed, and his body burnt. But the Creator, by His clemency, accepts this victim from him as a vicarious thing and a ransom, that its blood should be shed in place of his blood, soul for soul [or life for life]." <sup>1</sup> To this view, also, many Christian writers have adhered, as presenting the true and original idea of sacrifice; but the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews is, that it is sanctioned or sustained neither by reason nor by Scripture.

(3.) A third theory of sacrifice is that it was purely and merely *symbolical*, that is, that it adumbrated or showed forth certain religious ideas and truths. Of those who hold this view there are two sections widely separated from each other.

*a.* One of these consists of those who hold that sacrifice was the symbol merely of reconciliation between God and man, and that it denoted this by being, as it were, a friendly meal partaken of by God and the worshipper together, of which God was supposed to take the part offered, and man the part that remained for the sacrificial feast. This hypothesis savours strongly of the shallow and outward school from which it emanates,—that of Sykes and Priestley,—a school that has never uttered one profound or noble thought, but has invariably exercised its ingenuity in seeking to eviscerate theology of all but the most superficial and marrowless tenets. A very slight consideration will show the untenableness of this view.

(*a*) Even allowing that part of every sacrifice was eaten by the worshipper, yet as it was not eaten at the altar, but apart and in the offerer's own dwelling, the idea of a friendly meal between God and the offerer disappears. (*b*) It was not the case that of all sacrifices offered a part was consumed by the offerer and his friends; and though a few instances may be adduced from the usages of the heathen, yet they are few in number, and form the exception rather than the rule; for the heathen, carrying out their idea of doing a service or pleasure to the gods by sacrificing to them, frequently offered noxious

<sup>1</sup> A large collection of similar passages will be found in Outram, *De Sacrificiis*, lib. i. c. xxii. § 10 ff.

animals which they themselves would not eat, and which it was supposed the gods would be pleased to see destroyed. The practice of eating part of the sacrifice rather leads to the conclusion that the original and essential idea of sacrifice being that of the reconciliation effected by the rite, gave way in process of time to the secondary and subordinate idea of a social repast on the remains of the sacrifice as an expression of joy on account of the rite happily performed and the blessing secured. (c) This theory fails in the very instance of all others in which, if it were true, it ought to hold good. I refer to the whole burnt-offering, the express object of which was to make reconciliation between God and the sinner. This was not a thank-offering or eucharistical sacrifice; it was, as all must allow, specially and exclusively an offering for the purpose of procuring reconciliation with God. Surely, if the essential idea of sacrifice was that of a friendly meal between God and the offerer, it would be most sacredly carried out in this sacrifice; but it was a holocaust, or whole burnt-offering, unto the Lord, and not one part of it remained for the use of the offerer. (d) This theory is absurd as well as unfounded, for it makes a pure fiction the symbol of an actual fact. By the hypothesis, reconciliation has been effected between God and the sinner through the repentance of the latter, and the sacrifice is offered as a symbol of this. But it is made the symbol of this only by supposing what does not exist,—that the Deity actually partook of the sacrificial victim. Avowedly this is a mere fiction, and a fiction cannot be used as a symbol of something which has to be represented as real. But a sign or symbol is some actual thing presented to the senses for the purpose of suggesting or recalling to the mind some spiritual idea; its essence lies in its actuality. Take this away and it becomes useless, as useless as an inarticulate sound would be if employed as the sign of thought. The theory is, indeed, self-destructive; it resolves sacrifice into a mere symbol of reconciliation, and yet in order to this it makes the supposition which precludes sacrifice from having the character of a symbol at all.

b. The other section of those who regard sacrifice as a purely symbolical act take a much deeper view of the subject. They recognise propitiation as consisting of two parts—the

one the abolition or annihilation of sin, and the other the reunion of the sinner with God; and they think that sacrifice was intended to symbolize both of these. When the sinner laid his hand upon the victim and devoted it to God, it thereby entered into his place, and so was made sin for the sinner; and when it was burnt, an emblem was afforded of the abolition of the sin which had thus been symbolically laid upon it, whilst the taking of the blood and sprinkling of it before God on the altar and in the holy of holies was an emblem of fellowship with God, inasmuch as it was thereby intimated that God accepted the soul of the offerer presented to Him vicariously through the blood, which is the soul of the victim. In this way, it is contended, "both together these transactions furnished a complete representation of an accomplished propitiation."<sup>1</sup> Now, it must be admitted that this is not only ingenious, but also contains much that is true and important. Still, as a theory of sacrifice, it is exposed to an objection to all theories which regard it as *purely* symbolical. It is obvious that such a theory proceeds on the assumption that the sacrifice had no part in *producing* or *effecting* reconciliation between God and the sinner, but was simply the symbol of reconciliation *already effected*. This is untenable, for (a) nothing can be more plain than the repeated declarations of Scripture, that it was by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood that atonement or reconciliation was *made* on behalf of the sinner. This, indeed, is the ordinary phraseology in reference to this subject, and occurs so frequently that it is needless to cite instances.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, not an instance can be adduced from Scripture, nor, we may add, from the records of any nation using sacrifice, in which the slightest hint is given as to sacrifice being employed to shadow forth a reconciliation already made. Then (b) it is not easy to see, on this assumption, what was the use of sacrifice, or why such vast importance should have been attached to it by antiquity, both sacred and profane. A man by prayer and confession, or by some other means with which this sacrifice has had nothing to do, has found peace with God, and as a symbol of this he brings a lamb, or a bullock, or he-goat, and slays it at the

<sup>1</sup> Bähr, *Symb. Mos. Cult.* ii, 292.

<sup>2</sup> It occurs eight times in Lev. xvi. alone.

altar, and offers it to God. Admitting the propriety of this, which is questionable, of what *use* is such a ceremony? At the utmost it simply proclaims a fact in the personal history of the offerer of no special interest except to himself. Can it be believed that to utter such a proclamation was the sole or the main object of an institution so sacredly revered, so solemnly observed by all nations, and one instituted with so much authority, and invested with such religious sanctions by God Himself among His chosen people of old?

c. A somewhat different view of sacrifice as a symbolical act has been advocated with much ability, though without much clearness of discrimination or conclusiveness of reasoning, by Mr. Maurice in his *Lectures on Sacrifice*. So far as I can ascertain precisely his view, it seems to be this: Man as a sinner has to return to God in penitence and self-consecration, and in commemoration of this and as symbolically representing it he presented of his property to God in sacrifice, thereby intimating his surrender of himself to God, whilst God by accepting his sacrifice intimated to him His gracious acceptance of him. Of this theory it may suffice here to say that while it rests on a great truth, it utterly fails as an attempt to account for sacrifices, either by entirely losing sight of that truth or by egregiously misapprehending it. The truth to which I refer is that sacrifice is based on the idea of the sinner yielding himself up to God. This is the spiritual basis of the whole rite, apart from which it is a mere outward or dead rite. But in what relation does this stand to animal sacrifice? Or how can the slaying of an animal be in any rational way a symbol of this? Only through the medium of the doctrine of substitution, and that only by keeping fast hold of the truth that what man yields himself up to in this transaction is, not to God's favour, for that he has forfeited, not to God's rule, for there is a previous question to be settled arising out of his former transgression of that rule; but to God's righteous judgment, which denounces death against sin. All this, however, Mr. Maurice either misunderstands or ignores. According to him, man comes simply as a penitent and yields himself up to God as if there were no outstanding controversy between God and him arising from his previous sin. His theory is therefore

manifestly futile; it fails to show the *meaning* of the rite of sacrifice, and renders it virtually useless. It is absurd to represent the giving up of a brute-beast as a symbol of its owner giving himself up to God, and to represent a solemn rite appointed by God to be observed for no other end than simply to symbolize a transaction which it in no degree promoted, but which must be assumed to be already completed before the symbol could be appropriately offered. Of this theory, then, which its author has set forth with so much eloquence, we can say nothing else than that it rests on a blunder, or is the development of a sophism.

d. The same may, in substance, be said of the theory of Tholuek, that "sacrifice was a gift whereby man endeavoured to render his imperfect consecration of himself to God complete." Besides involving the very questionable idea of sacrifice being a *gift*,—an idea which seems to have found place only among the grosser notions of superstition,—this theory fails by losing sight of the actual facts of the case—the thing requiring to be done, and the reasons occasioning that requirement. Like the theories of Bähr and Maurice, it is essentially defective, because, like them, "it throws into the background the ideas which in these sacrifices are most prominent—those of a broken law, of consequent guilt, of liability to punishment, and of forgiveness through vicarious suffering."<sup>1</sup>

(4.) Profiting by the errors of these eminent inquirers, as well as by their solid and valuable conclusions, let us now attempt, from the facts we have already contemplated, to construct a just theory of the meaning and intent of sacrifice as originally instituted among men, and especially as exhibited in the divinely-constructed model of the Mosaic ceremonial—the most perfect that the world has ever seen.

a. In all scientific investigation it is of the utmost importance that we restrict ourselves rigidly to deal with *facts*. If, instead of this, we start with hypotheses or fictions, or if we take only a partial or one-sided view of the relations of the case, we can hardly miss landing ourselves in conclusions either positively erroneous or confused and misty. Now, in the case before us the facts with which we have to do are

<sup>1</sup> Liddon, *Bampton Lecture* for 1856, p. 109.

those connected with man's relation as a sinner to God. We are not now upon the ground of simple natural relationship between the creature and the Creator; we are on the ground of moral and rectoral relationship between God as a righteous Governor and man as a guilty transgressor. We must start, then, from a distinct and full recognition of the facts bearing upon this; for sacrifice is a scheme by which it is proposed to meet and adjust the difficulties arising out of these facts, so as to reconcile man the creature to God the Creator and Judge.

b. The facts, then, are that man as God's creature has revolted from Him, has broken His law, has incurred His displeasure, and is in danger of death as the penalty of his sins. The question is, How does sacrifice meet this peculiar case so as to cast any light on man's hopes of pardon and acceptance with God? Now, to tend towards an answer to this question we must bear in mind that the first and essential thing in religion is man yielding himself up to God in an entire and unqualified consecration. This is the proper condition of a creature in relation to his Creator, and in this state all holy creatures are. This was the religion of Paradise, and is the religion of heaven.

c. If, then, a sinner would be religious he must consecrate himself unto God, must renounce all enmity, and yield himself up to be dealt with by Him as He shall see meet. But in the case of a sinner this is virtually a yielding himself up to death; for as God has denounced death against sin, the only course He can see meet to follow will be to inflict on the sinner the penalty he has incurred. Here, then, at the very outset there is an apparently insuperable barrier in the way of a sinner's becoming religious. He cannot yield himself up to God in a holy consecration, for the only thing he can expect from God is death as the punishment of sin. How is this difficulty to be removed?

d. The only answer to this is that God shall accept something in lieu of the sinner's death—something that shall answer the same ends (at least) as would be answered by his death. If this can be procured, and if God will accept of it, the barrier may be removed, and the sinner, freed from guilt, may yield himself up in a holy consecration to God.

e. Now, it is evident that no gift man can present to God will ever come up to this requirement, and therefore the idea of offering animals as a gift could only be entertained by man after superstition and ignorance had beclouded his soul and disturbed all his moral relations. But the question is one belonging to the department of law, and law ever views men as elements of an organic whole, so that for its purposes the failures of one may be compensated for by the supererogations of another; and this may be carried out so far that if one man of sufficiently blameless character and sufficient moral power can be found, he may satisfy the law for many, for all. If the thing required to be done within the organic whole, it does not materially concern law how the doing of it is apportioned over the elementary parts of that whole; and hence if all fail but one, and if that one can make up for all the rest, the ends of law are answered, and the penalty incurred by the transgressors may be remitted.

f. In this way the doctrine of substitution emerges as a natural principle, and takes its place in the *rationale* of a scheme of religion for the sinner. It is only an application of this principle when we suppose the case of a pure being voluntarily submitting to death in order to secure the pardon of another or others who may have legally incurred that penalty. This is a notion which commends itself even to the actual reason of man, as we may gather from such a story as that in the Greek mythology of Prometheus, for whose pardon Cleiron offered himself to die, many instances of voluntary substitution recorded in ancient history, and such a sentiment as that put by Sophocles into the mouth of Œdipus when he says, "I think that one soul, if it be benevolent, by paying the penalty may suffice for myriads."<sup>1</sup>

g. Now, to advance another step, let us suppose that God, in announcing to our first parents the way He had provided for the rescue of man from the penalty of sin, had made known to them that through the sufferings and death of one perfectly pure and infinitely great the divine law should be satisfied, and so all barriers removed out of the way of man's consecration of himself unto God, such a revelation would shock no principle of natural justice in the mind, but would rather fall

<sup>1</sup> *Œd. Col.* 498.

in with what man's reason would tell him was the only possible expedient in such a case. Man would thus be put in possession of a basis for his religious life; and so long as he kept this in view, religion would be for him a possible and attainable thing.

*h.* But might he not forget this? Very possibly he might; and hence, in an age when there were no books, and when men were not supplied with any organized means of instruction, it was desirable to employ some means of a scenic kind for the purpose of representing to the eye the great truths and facts embodied in this revelation. Hence the institute of animal sacrifice, which is valuable as a visible representation and memorial of the great fundamental principles of religion as pertaining to a sinful creature. In this institution the ground-idea of all religion is preserved, viz. that the creature has to yield himself to God; but along with this there is continual memorial made of sin, and a sermon preached as to how alone sin can be forgiven and the sinner accepted by God. More particularly, sacrifice sets forth the following truths:—

(*a*) That sin is a terrible evil; it is not only a hateful thing, but it must be legally dealt with, and the perpetrator of it punished. In all cases the broken law of God demanding reparation lies at the foundation of sacrificial worship.

(*b*) By sacrifice men were reminded that death is the due penalty of sin,—not the death of the body merely, but the death of the soul—eternal death. Such is the penalty of sin which the law recognised by sacrifice denounces; and the endurance of death by the victim symbolized the actual infliction of this on the transgressor.

(*c*) By sacrifice the sinner was taught that only through a vicarious satisfaction to the law by means of some victim which God would accept could sin be forgiven him. The law demanded life instead of life, soul instead of soul; and it was therefore only as a victim was substituted for him and accepted by God that sin could be remitted to him.

(*d*) By the transference of guilt from the sinner to the victim, through the laying of his hands on its head and confessing his sins over it, by the killing of that victim as a satisfaction to the law, by the offering of the blood before



God, and by the subsequent burning of the whole or part of the flesh, or by the sending away of the living duplicate of the slain animal, as in the case of the scape-goat,—there was exhibited a vivid scenic representation of God's dealing with the sinner in the matter of the forgiveness of his sin. That sin is transferred in its guilt to another; the death it has merited is endured by that other; by this the law is satisfied, and then reconciliation is effected between God and the sinner, symbolized by the presentation of the blood before Him, and His acceptance of it as the symbol and representation of the purified sinner. The burning of the body or its being sent away may denote the destruction of the body of sin, or the perpetual removal of it from God's sight.

5. *The Apprehension by the Jewish People of the meaning of Sacrifice.*

These ideas were probably originally well understood by all men; but where they were left to the keeping of tradition they gradually became less and less distinct, or were mixed up with notions which destroyed their force and threw them into obscurity. Among the patriarchs, we may presume, they were retained with greater purity; but it is to the Mosaic institute that we are to look for the fullest and most striking presentation of them. Not only was that the most perfect system of religious ceremonial that has ever existed, but there was a peculiarity in the whole constitution of society instituted by Moses which gave a real and immediate effect to sacrifice, whereby the truths it symbolized were forcibly and continually brought home to the minds of the people. I allude to the fact that the civil constitution of the Jews was a theocracy, in which the God of the whole earth stood to the people of Israel in the relation of their King and Judge. This was a state of things altogether peculiar, and it gives an aspect of peculiarity to even the commonest relations of Jewish society and life. We need not wonder, then, to find that in virtue of it sacrifice acquired a character and force which it had nowhere else.

In order to understand this we must bear in mind that the theocracy was itself a symbol—a representation by actual

sensible things of the invisible things of God, even His moral government of the universe. As De Wette has justly remarked, it is only on this supposition that we can reconcile the representations given in the O. T. of the universal sovereignty of God with those given in the same books of His special relation to Israel; if the latter was not the symbolical miniature of the former, it contradicts it and makes the O. T. give a false view of God as well as a true one.

But if the Israelitish State was the symbol of God's moral government of the universe, then it follows that a whole system of correspondences would arise between God's universal administration and His administration as theocratic King of Israel. Theocratic law would be the symbol of moral law; a theocratic offence would be a symbol of a moral offence; a theocratic penalty the symbol of a moral penalty; and a theocratic expiation the symbol of a moral expiation. It is at this point we see the new light which the Mosaic institute cast on the meaning of sacrifice, and the new use to which it put that rite.

Let me remind you of a point formerly dwelt upon, viz. that sin was actually as a theocratic offence expiated by sacrifice. The man who had contracted theocratic guilt or defilement actually was purged of these, and so cleared of the penalty incurred thereby by the offering of the appointed sacrifice. There still remained the moral guilt of sin; and this the sacrifice could not directly touch. But what it could not do directly it could do by symbol. As the transgression under its theocratic aspect had incurred a theocratic penalty, so had it under its moral aspect incurred a moral penalty; and as sacrifice had, as a theocratic rite, purged the man from his theocratic guilt and saved him from the relative penalty, so *that* under the moral administration of God to which sacrifice answered would purge him from moral guilt and exempt him from moral penalties. A great lesson was thus brought home to the Israelite every day concerning the need of moral reconciliation and purity, and the means by which alone it could be effected,—a lesson which was unhappily lost upon the multitude, but which the pious and thoughtful could not fail to read and profit by.

But here a question will naturally occur. If the O. T.

saints were thus clearly taught that there was *something* in the moral administration of God which answered in nature and effect to sacrifice as an institute of the theocracy, have we any reason to believe that they knew what that something really was? In other words, did those who rightly interpreted the symbolical meaning of sacrifice, so as to perceive the lesson it read to them as to the way of escape from the guilt and penalty of sin, understand also its typical signification as foreshadowing that great sacrifice by which the sins of the world were to be taken away, and man as a sinner placed in a state of acceptance with God? If the theory of sacrifice above given be correct, the work of Christ on our behalf was the great archetypal fact to which sacrifice was adapted as a continual representation and memorial of it, and which consequently formed the substance of which sacrifice was the shadow, the antitype of which sacrifice was the type. That it was so we know from the statements of the N. T., in which the typical reference of the ancient institute to the person and work of the Messiah is strongly asserted, and the fulfilment of which in Jesus of Nazareth is clearly demonstrated. But was this reference understood by those who lived before Christ? Did they see in the sacrifices they offered continually for sin a memorial and foreshadowing of the propitiatory work of Christ as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"?

In answer to this, it must be at once admitted that the knowledge they would thus obtain of the nature of Christ's work could neither have been very precise nor very full. It is impossible either by words or signs to give men full or distinct views of events before they happen, and specially must this hold true in relation to events of a supernatural kind, and events entirely *sui generis*, as was the work of Jesus Christ. Still, as sacrifice taught men clearly the *principle* of moral administration involved in the work of Christ, there seems no reason why it might not also suggest to their minds the fact of which that rite was a *designed* and *adapted* representation. That it actually did so the following considerations render, I think, probable:—

(1.) If a pious Jew learned from sacrifice that there was something in the moral administration which in nature and

efficacy resembled it as an institute of the theocracy, we cannot believe that he would rest satisfied with knowing this and no more. He would naturally be led to inquire what that something was which was thus emphatically and constantly brought before his mind; and the more religious his state of mind, the more truly he learned the great moral lessons of the system under which God had placed him, the more intense and overwhelming would be his desire to penetrate the mystery and arrive at a solution of the problem. Nor can we conceive that such proper and necessary curiosity would be left to exercise itself in vain? Would God by means of an institute expressly adapted to excite such inquiries create this anxiety in the breast of His true subjects without affording them any means of satisfying it? Were it so, we must conclude that the godly Israelite, who in answer to his prayer that God would show him "the marvels" that are in His law was led into the spiritual meaning of sacrifice, was only punished for this by having an appetite created which there was no means of gratifying—a curiosity stimulated which there was no way of allaying. In this case the careless carnal Jew was really a wiser and happier man than the pious and devout saint who sought in the symbol the spiritual truth it contained; for by that very truth he was made restless, uneasy, and miserable. It seems almost impious to suppose such a thing.

(2.) If we receive the teaching of the N. T., we must regard the ancient sacrifices as really types of Christ—that is, sensible signs designed and adapted by God to prefigure the good things to come. But if they were so designed and adapted, they must have been so understood. If not, to whom *were* they types or prefigurations? Not to us who live since Christ came, for we need no figure to help us to realize what we know as a fact, and it is impossible we can have a *prefigure* of what is already past. It is only to those who lived before Christ that such modes of representation could be of any use; and if those who lived before Christ could make no use of them in the way they were designed and adapted to be useful, what were they but splendid superfluities, an empty and unsubstantial fragment, alike unworthy of a divine origin and of the devotion of intelligent men?

(3.) The number of priests actually engaged in the temple service was small compared with the total number of the sacerdotal tribe. The question arises, How were the residue employed? To this the answer is, that their main business was to teach the people the order and signification of the Mosaic institute. They were in this respect the official teachers of the Jews; and hence it is said, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Mal. ii. 7); and in the historical books repeated mention is made of this as the duty of the priests. Now, it is doubtless true that in later times this duty was discharged in a manner which rather blinded than enlightened the people as to the spiritual significancy of their ritual. But this, be it borne in mind, is always treated in the Bible as a sin on the part of the priests, not as an unavoidable result of want of means to do better; and in the earlier and better days of the Jewish State we cannot but believe that the priestly expositions of the law were such as were calculated to afford the people the full advantage which their ritual was designed and adapted to yield. But if so, then, as it was designed and adapted to remind them prophetically of the great Propitiation, this use of it must have been explained to the people by the priests.

(4.) Even apart from this, and at times when the priests were unfaithful to their duty, God took care for the spiritual instruction of the people by sending to them a continual succession of prophets,—men "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and who therefore told the people exactly what God willed they should know. Now, we are certain that of the messages of the prophets the doctrine concerning the suffering and propitiatory Messiah formed a main part. "To Him," says Peter, "give all the prophets witness, that, through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Pious people among the Jews then, we may be sure, *knew* this,—knew it as a precious and comforting truth,—and would often seek to realize it in its force and power. But if their minds were familiar with this truth, can we conceive that they would constantly take part in a ceremony designed to symbolize or foreshadow this very truth without even perceiving that

such was its meaning? We cannot imagine this without imputing to them a degree of stolidity such as all that we know of them declares to have been no characteristic of them.

(5.) In fine, we know that the O. T. saints did obtain the pardon of their sins, and knew by experience the blessedness of the man to whom iniquity was forgiven, and whose sin was covered or cancelled by atonement. We know that they were justified, and that from sins for which the Mosaic institute provided no expiation; as, *e.g.*, in the case of David, for whose sin no sacrifice or offering could be presented or accepted by God. Now, on what ground was this forgiveness extended to them? If not on the ground of sacrificial atonement according to the law, on the ground of what atonement was their sin covered and their transgressions freely blotted out? The only answer that can be given to this in accordance with the exclusiveness of the one salvation provided by God in Christ is, that they saw in His work a sufficient sacrifice provided for their sins, and so rested by faith on Him and were pardoned through Him. But if so, can we suppose they remained ignorant of the designed and adapted representation of this placed before them in the sacrifices which they continually offered?

These considerations enable us to complete the view we are led to take of ancient sacrifice, especially as exhibited among the Jews. It was a symbolical rite adumbrating by sensible objects and acts, great spiritual truths concerning the ground and medium of the sinner's acceptance with God, and at the same time it was typically prophetic of the great work by which Christ was to fulfil His sacerdotal functions by making an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. We therefore conclude that sacrifice may be most properly described as a symbolico-typical rite having respect to the propitiatory work of the Redeemer.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

(iii.) *The Sacrifice of Christ.*1. *Its Relation to Ancient Sacrifices.*

We have now to look at the subject of sacrifice in relation to the work of Jesus Christ, and to the sacrifice which He is said to have offered for us.

And here it must be obvious, at the very outset, that if the idea presented of the ancient sacrifices be correct, the death of Christ cannot be looked upon as a sacrifice in the *same* sense as the ancient offerings. For if these were originally symbolical and typical rites, and under the Levitical dispensation were legally and formally so represented, and if the work of Christ was the reality which they adumbrated, it is certain that *it* could not have been a sacrifice in the same sense as they; the reality could not be the same as that the essence of which lay in its being, not the reality, but only the symbol or type of the reality. When, therefore, the death of Christ is spoken of as a sacrifice, we are constrained to put upon the expression a somewhat different meaning from that used regarding the offering of a lamb or a goat.

In what sense, then, did the apostles refer to Christ's death as a sacrifice?

(1.) They declared that the death of Christ accomplished in reality that which the ancient sacrifices only represented symbolically, viz. the taking away of sin by a substitutionary propitiation. In proof of this I ask your attention to the following series of statements:—

*a.* The death of Christ is represented as an event having an important purpose. It was not an occurrence that came to Him in the course of nature or by apparent accident; nor was it one which was merely turned to some good account, after it occurred, by wise and good men; nor was it merely overruled by the Providence of God for good. It was an

event by itself, voluntarily submitted to by Christ and preappointed by God for an end, and that an end of vast importance. For proof of this examine the following passages: Isa. liii. 10; Mark x. 45; John x. 18; Acts ii. 23, iv. 28; 1 Pet. i. 20. Some of these passages attest more than I at present adduce them to prove, but this they do most unequivocally prove; for if words have any meaning, they declare that the death of Christ was both on His own part and in the decree and purpose of God a designed event for the accomplishment of a contemplated end. If He gave Himself up to death; if, having a right to resign His life or retain it as He chose, He yet laid it down; if this death, in all its circumstances of sorrow and pain, was in accordance with the good pleasure of Jehovah; and if it came to pass in fulfilment of His eternal decree and appointment,—we must regard it as having been a means to an end, and that an end of vast importance. For in such a case the only alternative supposition is that Jehovah foreordains events for no purpose or an unworthy one, and that Jesus Christ voluntarily laid down His life without knowing why He did so, or without having any worthy end to answer by such an act—a supposition which no sane mind could entertain, and which no pious mind could endure.

b. The death of Christ being a means to an end, the Scriptures teach that that end had a reference to man's benefit. On this point the testimony is so explicit that it does not admit of being called in question (see John x. 15; Luke xxii. 20; Eph. v. 25; Rom. viii. 32; 2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. v. 6). Nor is it in the N. T. alone that statements to this effect are found. What can be more explicit than the language of Isaiah (liii. 4, 5), unless it be that of Daniel (ix. 26) in his memorable announcement concerning the Messiah? Whatever difficulty there may be in determining the chronological point involved in this statement, there can be none as to the meaning of the event which the prophet announces—that the death of the Messiah was not for Himself or on His own account, and therefore necessarily for the benefit or on account of others—of those with whom He was to stand related.

c. The death of Christ was designed to benefit men by



taking away sin. This might be inferred as a corollary from the preceding proposition, because if the death of Christ was in a religious point of view for man's behoof at all, it must have had some effect in taking away the sin which is the great evil from which he needs to be delivered, and that from which if he is not delivered, all other benefits will go for nothing as respects his eternal interests. But, without dwelling on this, let us come at once to the express statements of Scripture in such passages as these: John i. 29; Heb. ix. 26; 1 John i. 7, iii. 5. These statements are very clear, and they shut us up to the conclusion that Christ's blood was shed and His death endured that thereby we might be freed from sin, that this sin might be taken away, and that we, who had become burdened and polluted by it, might be cleansed. And hence, when He would have His people commemorate His love for them, that which He especially places before them as the benefit they are to contemplate is His "blood, shed for the remission of sins."

d. Christ took away sin by having it imputed to Him, and bearing the punishment due to it. This is manifest from many statements of Scripture: Isa. liii. 5, 8; Rom. iv. 25; 1 Pet. iii. 18, etc. The full import of these statements we do not at present stop to explore; they are adduced here simply to show that Christ took away sin not merely by setting a good example of obedience to the law of God which men might follow, not merely by teaching fully and perfectly the will of God and urging men to obey it, not merely by making known to men God's willingness to be at peace with them and to pardon them; but specifically and primarily by taking their sin upon Him and suffering in consequence of that sin. It must be evident to any reflective mind that on the supposition of any other sense short of this the statements just quoted are extravagant, if not absurd.

e. In accordance with this, the special benefits represented as accruing to men through Christ are redemption from sin, including both the remission of its guilt and the removal of its tyranny, through His blood, and reconciliation to God by His death (Acts xx. 28; Rom. v. 9, 10, 11; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 19-22; 1 Pet. iii. 18, i. 18; Rev. i. 5, 6). In all these passages the redemption of sinners, their acceptance

with God, and their enjoyment of privilege with Him, are distinctly traced to the meritorious efficacy of the Saviour's death. It was His blood that purchased them, His blood that redeemed them, His blood that formed the medium of their approach to God, and the ground of their reconciliation with God. And, in perfect accordance with this, we find that that by which sinners are brought into personal enjoyment of these blessings is faith in His blood—not the mere acceptance of His doctrines, not the mere following of His example, however steadily, honestly, or successfully; but faith in His blood, reliance on His death, dependence on the efficacy of that blood of the cross which was shed for the remission of sins.

Now, when these things are duly considered, it cannot fail to be admitted that in the work which Christ accomplished by His death we have an actual performance of all that the ancient sacrifices were designed to represent and symbolize. On this ground, therefore, there was sufficient reason for our Lord's work being represented as a sacrifice for sin. It was so because by the shedding of His blood in the room of sinners reconciliation was effected between God and man. It was at once an *expiation* and a *propitiation*. It was the former as it related to man, for whose forgiveness it afforded a sufficient reason. It was the latter as it related to God, to whom, as the Just and Perfect Governor of all, it furnished an adequate ground on which He could honourably forgive sin. In this work, consequently, all that sacrifice as a symbolical act adumbrated was really and fully accomplished.

(2.) In the death of Christ there was an actual fulfilment of all that was predicted by the ancient Jewish sacrifices. On this part of the subject we need not dwell after the investigation already made into the meaning of the ancient sacrifices. Suffice it to say that they were the shadow of good things to come, that they foretold that God would provide for His people a vicarious redemption, that One would appear to take away sin by assuming it upon Him and suffering on account of it, and that thereby reconciliation would be made for iniquity, and actual redemption secured for the guilty.

The conclusion at which we have arrived as to the sense intended to be conveyed by the sacred writers when they represent the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin may be

confirmed by comparing this with other modes of representation used in Scripture in reference to the same subject.

a. Thus our Lord is said to have given Himself as a *ransom* or *ransom-price* for us. This statement occurs frequently in the N. T. The word commonly used is λύτρον, which signifies properly the price of redemption, *i.e.* the price paid for the redemption of slaves from bondage, captives from captivity, and those doomed to death from the death to which they are doomed. In all these acceptations it is used in the LXX. as answering to the Hebrew קָנָה, "a ransom price;" כֶּנֶס, "that by which a man's life is ransomed," etc. In one case in the N. T. the word ἀντίλυτρον is used (1 Tim. ii. 6) with the same meaning. The root from which λύτρον comes is the verb λύω, which means primarily *to loosen* or *release*, and is constantly used by the classical authors to denote the action of one who, by the payment of money or by any equivalent means, delivers a captive from bonds or a debtor from his obligations. From this the word λύτρον came to denote a ransom price, or that by which the λύειν or releasing was effected. Cognate with this is the verb λυτροῦν and the verb ἀπολυτροῦν, "to pay the ransom price," and so "*to redeem* or *buy back*." When, therefore, Jesus Christ is said to give Himself "a ransom for many," or "for all," to give Himself, or to *be* given for us, that He might redeem us, and such like, and when in correspondence with this believers are said to be redeemed by His blood, and to have redemption through Him, the meaning must be that in some sense His life was given for their lives. Their life was forfeited by sin; and as they are ransomed by Him, He must have paid the forfeit for them, and so redeemed them; and as they have been redeemed by His blood, that blood must have been the price of their ransom; in other words, His death is the means of their being delivered from that state of forfeiture into which sin had brought them. This is substantially the same idea as we have seen involved in His being a sacrifice for us.

b. In other passages believers are represented as being "bought with a price" (1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23). The same idea substantially is conveyed here as in the former case; the only difference being that in the one the buying is for the purpose of redeeming from captivity or delivering from a burden; in the

other, it is for the sake of obtaining possession of that which is bought. As the buying is effected by the laying down of a sum of money which is considered the equivalent of the object for which it is given, so the blood of Christ shed for us is the equivalent rendered for the possession of us, that we might become His and, through Him, God's property. Such expressions, indeed, are not to be taken too literally and precisely, as if they were intended to convey the idea that the Christian redemption is of the nature of a commercial transaction, in which the sufferings of Christ were rendered as an exact *quid pro quo* to secure our exemption from merited suffering, or to secure us for God. The language is figurative, and must not be too closely pressed. But it cannot mean less than we have seen is set forth by our Lord's being sacrificed for us, that is, in virtue of the substitution of Christ for us and His suffering on our behalf, release, pardon, acceptance, restoration are secured to us.

c. Another class of terms used in reference to the work of Christ on our behalf consists of those in which He is spoken of as a propitiation for sins (*ἱλασμός περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν*, 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10), and as a propitiatory offering by His blood (*ἱλαστήριον ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι*, Rom. iii. 25). To propitiate is properly to render some being favourable to another by means of something which either averts his wrath from that other, or inclines him to show him kindness. Thus the publican prayed that God would be propitiated towards him, *i.e.* would on some known or assumed ground show him favour. The word is also used in the sense of *expiate*, as in Heb. ii. 17, where Christ as High Priest is said to "expiate [A. V., 'make reconciliation for'] for the sins of the people,"—a usage borrowed from the close connection in the Hebrew mind between expiation (*כפר*) and *propitiation*, whence the eapporeth or lid of the ark of the covenant came to be denominated by the Jews who translated the O. T. into the Greek, *ἱλαστήριον*. When, therefore, Christ is called a propitiation or propitiatory offering by His blood, the meaning must be that He by His death did that by means of which man's sins have been expiated, and a way opened by which God's favour can come to man. Here again we have substantially the same thing presented to us as when our Lord is represented as sacrificed for us.

d. It is in perfect accordance with these representations that the apostle teaches that believers are "partakers" of Christ's death, as he has in Rom. vi. and elsewhere. They, according to his representation, died in Christ's death. Even on the most superficial view such a statement can mean nothing less than that it is through the death of Christ that they enjoy salvation—that it is by His death that they come to share in the blessings of the heavenly state into which He has entered. But the statement cannot be restricted to this significance. It means more than this; it means that they died in Christ's death in that He died as their representative and substitute. Believers were "in" Him when He submitted to death, as the constituent is in his representative, as the client is in his patron; and the maxim, "*quod facit per alium facit per se*," applies here as to the effect of Christ's work on the believer. He did it really *per se*; believers have done it *per illum*, and so virtually *per se*. They are thus partakers of His death. Whatever benefits were secured by His death were secured to them whose substitute and representative He was.

These considerations may serve to show that the idea involved in the sacrificial language used by the apostle in reference to the work of Christ pervades all their representations of the nature and effect of that work. The figures are different; the truth taught is the same. Instead, then, of their language being, as some would insinuate, a mere accommodation to Jewish usage and prejudice, such language only conveys under one and a most fitting representation what was the doctrine uniformly taught concerning the work of Christ. Like the image wrought into the ancient shield, these representations are so interwoven with the entire texture of the Christian doctrine that we can separate them from it only by breaking the whole in pieces, and substituting for Christianity, as the apostle taught it, something entirely different.

## 2. Names of Christ bearing on His sacrificial Work.

The evidence from Scripture which we have already adduced with the view of showing that what Jesus Christ did for men was in reality what the ancient sacrifices were designed to symbolize, is such as a perfectly unsophisticated inquirer might

regard as sufficient to support the conclusion at which we have arrived ; but it is nevertheless a conclusion to which many profess themselves unable to reach from the premises. This, taken in connection with the immense importance of the subject, renders it proper, before we proceed further, that we should survey with a careful eye the scriptural evidence bearing on the design and purpose of our Lord's work.

The most thoroughly satisfactory course that could be pursued with this end in view would be to commence with the earlier books of the Bible, and follow the stream of evidence through the successive declarations of those who through divine inspiration gave utterance to the truth concerning Christ. But, gratifying and beneficial as such a survey of Scripture testimony on this point would be, we are constrained to waive it, and in its stead to content ourselves with such a glance at certain leading points of evidence as our limited time will permit. For the sake of condensation and clearness we shall arrange these under distinct heads, and shall begin with the *Names and Titles of Christ* bearing on His work. Of these we may notice the following:—

(1.) SAVIOUR (Σωτήρ). This term, which is applied continually to Jesus Christ, and is the term by which we have learned from this most commonly to designate Him, conveys in itself simply the idea of a deliverer; and as applied to Christ in relation to men expresses no more, in its widest acceptance, than that He is for man a deliverer from all the ills under which he suffers here, especially from sin, the head and fountain of all the rest. Taken simply by itself, therefore, it says nothing as to the mode or means of the deliverance; it merely expresses the fact that deliverance for us from sin and its effects comes somehow through Christ. But we cannot look at the word simply in and by itself; we must look at it in the connection in which it stands as applied by the New Testament writers to Jesus Christ. And here a noticeable fact emerges—that of the many instances in which the term occurs in reference to Jesus Christ, not one of them is so framed as to lead to the conclusion that it is by His doctrine, His entreaties, or His example that He delivers from sin, whereas several connect this result with His death. The only passage that might seem to offer an exception to the

former part of this statement is 2 Pet. ii. 20, where the apostle speaks of men escaping from "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If we take the word "knowledge" to signify the *doctrine* taught by Christ, the statement of the apostle would certainly go to show that it was by means of His teaching that Christ delivers men from the pollutions of the world. Now, there is a sense in which this is true, even on the hypothesis that it is by His sacrificial work that Christ really effects this; for as that work forms part of His doctrine, and as it is by the believing reception of the fact thus made known that men are saved, it may truly be said that it is by the doctrine of Christ that men are delivered from the pollutions of the world, though in reality that which delivers them is not the doctrine, but the great event which it announces. But on this we need not enlarge, because it is by no means clear that the passage is to be so taken. On the contrary, it seems much more probable that by the "knowledge" of Christ here we are to understand the truth made known concerning Him, or, taking it subjectively, our own personal acquaintance with Him. In this case the passage says nothing as to *how* it is that Christ delivers men from the pollutions of the world; it simply refers to the instruments employed to bring individuals into possession of the blessings Christ secures to men as their Saviour.

Of the passages which connect the work of Christ as a Saviour with His sacerdotal office, and especially His sacrificial death, we may take the following: Eph. v. 2, 3, 25, 26. Here it is evident that Christ's giving Himself for His Church is set forth as that in virtue of which He is its Saviour and its Sanctifier. In Heb. vii. 25, Christ's power as a Saviour is still more explicitly set forth in connection with His high-priestly character and office; and the perpetual and intransferable character of Christ's priesthood is set forth as the ground of assurance of His ability to save "to the uttermost," etc. Salvation, then, is the work of Christ as a Priest, and it is in virtue of His priesthood and His sacrifice for His Church that He is its Saviour. This will be still further apparent when we notice the title of—

(2.) CAPTAIN or AUTHOR OF SALVATION (ἀρχηγὸς τῆς

σωτηρίας), applied to Christ in Heb. ii. 10. It matters little comparatively how we render the word ἀρχηγός here. It properly means one who begins anything, who is at the head of it and sets it agoing. Hence it may denote "author," "chief," "leader," or "foregoer." It is probably in the last sense it is here used, though some would prefer to render it "author" or "beginner." The important point for us at present is, that as ἀρχηγός τ. σ. Christ was διὰ παθημάτων τελειωθείς, "perfected by means of sufferings," and that He was to be this in order "to bring many sons unto glory." Interpreters differ as to the meaning of τελειώσαι here, some taking it as equivalent to "to consummate," others "to consecrate," and others "to make one such as he ought to be," and others "to make perfectly blessed." The choice lies between consummating and conserving, under one or other of which the rest easily fall. Drs. Pye Smith and MacKnight adopt the former meaning, the latter of whom says, "The word τελειώσαι properly signifies to make a thing complete, by bestowing upon it the highest degree of that perfection which is suitable to its nature; applied to the Captain of our salvation, it signifies His being made an effectual Captain of salvation, that is, an effectual Saviour." This seems to give the true meaning of the passage. Now, how was it that Christ was thus made complete as a Saviour, so that He could "bring many sons unto glory"? It was by means of "sufferings;" and that the writer has here in view especially, though not exclusively, those sufferings which our Lord consummated on the cross, may be confidently inferred from the fact that he has in the preceding verse referred to the πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου as that through which Christ became "crowned with glory," and by which He "tasted death for every man." Here, then, we have a clear case in which the efficacy of Christ's work as a Saviour is connected with His sufferings and His death. And the same may be said of other passages in which the term ἀρχηγός is applied to Christ, as in Acts iii. 15, in which He is called "the Prince of Life," with allusion to His resurrection, though put to death by the Jews; Acts v. 31, where He is called a "Prince and a Saviour;" and Heb. xii. 2, where He is called the "Author of faith," on the ground that for the joy set before



Him He "endured the cross, despising the shame," etc. The conclusion to which we are thus brought is that Jesus Christ is a Saviour, not in virtue of His doctrine or example, so much as by means of His sufferings unto death, and in virtue of His sacerdotal office and functions. It follows that to call Him our Saviour whilst His propitiatory work is not recognized as the ground and medium of our salvation, is to acknowledge in words what in reality is denied.

(3.) "HE THAT SANCTIFIETH" (ὁ ἁγιάζων) is a phrase applied to Christ in the verse following that which we have been considering. In what sense is the verb used here? Does it refer to moral purification or to legal absolution, or to neither exclusively, but rather to the whole act by which Christ makes men fit to appear before God? Owen and Calvin take the first of these meanings; but Owen says, "It includes also, κατ' ἀκολουθήσιν, 'by just consequence,' the sense of consecration or dedication, for they who are sanctified are separated unto God." The mass of modern interpreters prefer the second. Dr. Pye Smith explains ὁ ἁγιάζων by "he who makes men fit to be presented to God;" and this is perhaps the best explanation that can be given. It includes the whole operation of Christ for our behoof: for fitness to be presented to God implies at once the cancelling of legal guilt and the removal of moral pollution. In this phrase, then, as used of Christ, we have again a recognition of His propitiatory agency on our behalf.

(4.) MEDIATOR (Μεσίτης). This term, as applied to our Lord, occurs chiefly in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and there always with reference to the διαθήκη, or covenant of grace. Thus in Heb. viii. 6, Christ is called κρείττονος διαθήκης μεσίτης; in ix. 15, He is called διαθήκης καινῆς μεσίτης; and in Heb. xii. 24 the same phrase is used, with the substitution of νέας for καινῆς. The only other passage in which this term is applied to Christ is 1 Tim. ii. 5, where He is called the εἰς μεσίτης Θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπου. In what sense is this term, as applied to our Lord, to be understood? Primarily, the word signifies simply one who is between two, and it implies usually that he is there for the purpose of effecting union, harmony, or agreement between them. Hence it is used of one who mediates between two contending or

hostile parties, with a view to reconciliation ; and also of one who acts as an internuncio or interpreter between two parties, so as to convey the mind of one to the other. In this latter sense some have contended that it applies to our Lord, and that all that is implied in His being called *μεσίτης*, or Mediator, between God and man is that He is the medium of divine communication to man, whereby the latter is brought into acquaintance with God's will, and a state of union with Him. Now that this is *involved* in His mediatorship, and forms part of His mediatorial work, we would be far from denying ; but that the term as applied to Christ means nothing more than this, the passages in which it occurs forbid us to admit. In Heb. viii. 6 it is applied to Christ as showing that He had obtained "a more excellent ministry," and so is a greater Priest than the priests under the law, where, unless His office as Mediator has to do with purification and reconciliation, the apostle institutes a comparison which does not hold. Then, again, in Heb. ix. 15, the expression is introduced after a comparison between the propitiatory efficacy of the Old Testament sacrifices and the far higher efficacy of the blood of Christ as adequate to "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God ;" and then the writer goes on to say : "For this cause He is the Mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." It is evident that the mediatorship here intended is one which is to take effect through priestly acts—through sacrifice and propitiation ; a conclusion which is further confirmed by the remarkable passage that follows, in which the writer insists on the death of the covenant-victim for the validity of the covenant, and concludes that the covenant, of which Christ was at once the Mediator and the Victim, stands sure, because Christ "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and "was once offered to bear the sins of many." In Heb. xii. 24, the mediatorship of Christ with His sacrifice is no less plainly, perhaps still more directly, enunciated, in which by the "blood of sprinkling" the writer evidently alludes to the sacrificial blood sprinkled by Moses on the Israelites for

the ratification of the Levitical covenant, and he applies this to the blood of Christ shed for our sins by which the new covenant was ratified, and which is virtually sprinkled on us, inasmuch as we are thereby brought under the blessings of that covenant. In 1 Tim. ii. 5 the same connection is most explicitly brought out, for here we are referred to Christ's work in giving Himself "a ransom for all," as that in virtue of which He is a Mediator for us with God. The conclusion forced on us by all these passages is that it is only as we recognize the *propitiatory* mediation of Christ on our behalf that we recognize Him as a Mediator in the sense in which that term is applied to Him in Scripture.

(5.) SHEPHERD (*ποιμήν*). This is a title applied to the Messiah in the O. T. (Isa. xl. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Zech. xiii. 7), and is appropriated by our Lord to Himself, and ascribed to Him by His apostles (John x. 1; Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 4). In itself, it implies no more than a gracious relation between Christ and His people, in virtue of which He protects, leads, and feeds them, as did Jehovah, the great Shepherd of Israel, to His chosen people of old. But the way in which this title is sometimes introduced is remarkable, as intimating an essential connection between Christ's office as a Shepherd and His propitiatory sacrifice. Thus in Zech. xiii. 7, which undoubtedly relates to the Messiah, it is predicted that the Messiah as the appointed Shepherd of Israel should be put to death, that the ancient flock should be scattered, but that Jehovah would gather again, as into a new flock, the "little ones," *i.e.* the true followers of the Lord, often represented in Scripture as little, small, and despised in the world (comp. Isa. lx. 22; Jer. xlix. 20, l. 45; Luke xii. 32). There is nothing here that points us expressly to the propitiatory work of Christ; but it could hardly have been read by the ancient Jews with intelligence without a conviction that the Messiah, as the Shepherd of Israel, was to suffer at the hand of Jehovah, and that the gathering of the true flock was in some way to stand connected with this. The minds of His disciples, then, might be prepared for what He Himself said in the discourse recorded in John x., where He expounds His relation to His Church as its Shepherd, and where He lays such stress on His giving

His life for His sheep. It is plain that, from His repeated reference to this, our Lord counted His propitiatory death as the proof and concomitant of His being the Good Shepherd, the true Shepherd appointed by the Father to care for the sheep. We are therefore not surprised to find Him called the "great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20). Some connect this latter clause with the verb *ἀναγαγών*, as if the meaning were that God brought Christ from the dead by the blood of the everlasting covenant; but the majority of commentators connect it either with *ποιμένα* or with *μέγαν*, and this seems to be the preferable arrangement. The clause is plainly to be connected with *μέγαν*, as showing *why* Christ was the "great Shepherd." So Tholuck, Ebrard, and Stuart. A few names of note are on the other side of this question, the chief of whom is Delitzsch; but even he admits that the passage conveys the truth that Christ is the Shepherd of the sheep in virtue of the blood He shed for their redemption. In whichever way, then, the passage be construed, the connection between Christ's relation to His people as a Shepherd and His death, by which this relation was established, is affirmed. The preferable construction, however, seems to be that which connects *ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου* with *μέγαν*, or with the whole clause, *ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν*. Christ became, or was constituted, the great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood which He shed for them, and by which the covenant of redemption stood confirmed.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### 3. *Phrases descriptive of the Work of Christ.*

I pass on to a second class of statements bearing on this subject, closely allied to the preceding, but differing from it in this, that the instances to be alleged are not so much *titles* of our Lord as phrases employed to describe what He became,

or submitted to, for our behoof. Of these we notice the following:—

(1.) LAMB OF GOD (ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ). By this phrase He was described by His forerunner John when he pointed Him out to the notice of the people on the banks of the Jordan; and the term Lamb is applied to Him repeatedly elsewhere in the N. T. There is a difference of opinion as to the origin of this phrase as applied to our Saviour. By some it is traced to the typical reference to Christ furnished by the paschal lamb, by others to that of the lamb offered in the daily sacrifice, and by others to the allusion in Isa. liii. to the Messiah as a lamb. It appears to me that there are serious objections to all these views, and I think we shall proceed upon safe ground only if we regard the appellative as originating in the transaction on Mount Moriah, where the ram caught in the thicket appeared as the lamb provided by God Himself for the burnt-offering, by the substitution of which for Isaac he escaped, and so appears as a type of Jesus Christ, the great Substitute provided by God for sinners, through whose death they are delivered from death. In adopting this view, however, it is not necessary to suppose that no allusion is intended to the paschal lamb, or to the lamb of the daily sacrifice, or to the description of the suffering Messiah in Isa. liii., for all these stand connected as referring to the same object. But the primary and chief reference is, we believe, to the ram substituted for Isaac.

Only thus do we see the full force of the addition τοῦ Θεοῦ. In what sense was Jesus Christ the Lamb of God? He was so because God had Himself provided this sacrifice; and the force of the addition, τοῦ Θεοῦ, arises from the contrast thus tacitly introduced between such sacrifices as men might provide for themselves and the Lamb provided by God as a sacrifice that should take away the sins of the world. So also in 1 Pet. i. 19, where believers are said to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb, ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου, the reference undoubtedly is to Him "as a lamb given up to death in the service of God."<sup>1</sup> Here, then, we must take fast hold of sacrificial ideas if we are to do justice to the language employed to describe our Lord. It is not

<sup>1</sup> Hoffmann, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1.

enough that we think of Him as a lamb in respect of the gentleness and meekness of His deportment ; that is true, but it is only part of the truth, and not the most prominent part ; it is as the Lamb provided by God as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, as the suffering substitute for sinners who by His propitiatory death has covered their sins and carried them away, that He is principally presented to us under this designation. As if still more strikingly to fix this on our minds, the Apostle John tells us that when the vision of the heavenly state was opened to his view, he saw in the midst of the throne "a lamb as it had been slain," and that he heard the inhabitants of heaven singing a new song, saying, "Worthy art Thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood," etc. ; and again he heard the acclamation of a mighty multitude, which no man could number, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." There can be no doubt that the design of these passages is to convey to us the idea that the glory and honour which Christ enjoys in heaven accrue to Him directly through His propitiatory work, and are received by Him as still sustaining the character of our Sacrifice and Substitute. "The reference," says Stuart, "is to the paschal lamb. . . . As the sacrifice of the first paschal lamb procured redemption or deliverance from the plague that smote and destroyed the Egyptians, so did the sacrifice of the Lamb of God procure eternal redemption for His people, or take away the sins of the world." "That Christ appears here in the form of a slain lamb," says Hengstenberg, "was done out of respect to the occasion ; His appearance imaged that through which He had conquered to open the book, His sufferings as the God-man, by which He had made reconciliation. The lamb comes here into consideration primarily as an animal for sacrifice." The inference from all this is very obvious and certain—that if we would speak and think of Christ as the Lamb of God in the same sense in which that appellation is given to Him by the sacred writers, we must give especial prominence to His sacrificial work as therein implied.

(2.) We pass on to notice the terms *λύτρον* and *ἀντίλυτρον*

as applied to our Lord in connection with His work on earth. The former of these terms He Himself uses when He says of Himself (Matt. xx. 28), "The Son of Man hath not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His life *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*." The latter of these terms is employed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 6, where he says of Christ, "Who gave Himself *ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*." Between these two passages there are certain shades of difference in respect of meaning; but on this we need not dwell at present, because the difference does not depend on the words we are now engaged in examining. To all intents and purposes, *λύτρον* followed by *ἀντί* and *ἀντίλυτρον* are one and the same word. Let us inquire, then, what is the idea expressed by these terms? Tracing them back to their root we come to the verb *λύειν*, which denotes simply to release, without implying anything as to the grounds on which the release is effected. Used in the middle voice, however, it has the more specific sense of liberating by means of a ransom-price paid by the liberator to the party by whom the person liberated was held. The nouns formed from the verb for the most part retain this more specific sense; and hence *λύτρον*, *ἐπίλυτρον*, and the plural *λύτρα* are used in the classics to denote a price paid for the ransom of a captive,—a sense in which they are frequently employed. In some of the later writers, also, *λύτρα* is used of sacrifices offered for expiating sin; thus Lucian, in one of his *Dialogues of the Gods*, introduces one of his interlocutors as saying to Jupiter, "But if you will let me go, I promise to you that another goat shall be sacrificed, *λύτρα ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ*, as a ransom price for me" (*Dial.* iv.). In the LXX. *λύτρον* is used (1) in the sense of a ransom of life (Ex. xxi. 30, where it corresponds to Heb. *פְּדוּת*, rendered by Genesius "price of redemption"); (2) in the sense of a slave's redemption (Lev. xxv. 51), etc. In the former of these senses it is used in Prov. xiii. 8, where the Hebrew word is *כִּפָּר*, "propitiation." Such being the fixed meaning of the word, no other meaning can be justly ascribed to it, as used by our Lord in Matt. xx. 28, than that of ransom-price or propitiation; so that His meaning is that He came for the purpose of giving His life as a price for the securing of deliverance to many. "The meaning," says De Wette, "is, that with His

death He might redeem many from death." The expression of Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 6 is equivalent to, "He gave Himself as a ransom-price for all;" or, if there is any difference between *λύτρον* and *ἀντίλυτρον*, it lies wholly in the greater force with which the latter expresses the idea of substitution; "*loco hominum penas huisse*" is the exegesis of Leo, *in loc.* If, then, we would assign to such expressions their full value, we must regard Christ as having effected our deliverance from sin by taking our case upon Him, and by offering Himself as an equivalent for us, so as to meet all that required to be met ere we could be exempted from the penalty due to sin. At the very least, we must assign to such modes of representation the design of teaching us that the death of Christ served as an adequate ground or reason in equity for our being exempted from the penalty of the law.

(3.) A third expression used of our Lord in Scripture as descriptive of His work on our behalf is that He was made a CURSE (*κατάρα*) for us. The passage in which this occurs is Gal. iii. 13, where Paul says: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become (or by becoming) a curse for us (for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree)." On the very surface of this passage there lies obviously the statement of a connection of some sort between Christ's ignominious death on the cross and our deliverance from the curse of the law. The apostle represents us as under the curse of the law because of sin, intending by curse here condemnation or penalty; he represents Christ as redeeming us from that; he represents the redemption as effected by His becoming a curse for us, *i.e.* by His undergoing the penalty for us; and he represents this as brought about by His hanging upon the tree, *i.e.* dying on the cross. Beyond all question, then, according to Paul here, our redemption is effected by Christ's death, and the curse which came upon Him was for our sakes, and He became a curse for us in order to this end. It could only be a very perverse ingenuity which could attempt to turn aside the force of this interpretation. But it may be fairly asked, Does not the passage teach *more* than this? Have we not here also expressly stated the fact of Christ's substitution in our room and stead? And is not this the proper force of the phrase



"made a curse for us"? The reply to these inquiries, made by almost all divines and interpreters of the Evangelical school, is in the affirmative. The theologians of the Reformation all rely on this passage as proving directly the suffering of Christ as the Substitute of His people. "Since," says Luther, "according to the law, every murderer must be hanged, so must Christ, according to the law of Moses, be hanged; for He hath assumed the person of a sinner and murderer, yea, not of one only, but of all sinners and murderers before God." Calvin (*Comment in loc.*) says: "The apostle says not that He was cursed, but that He was a curse, which is more; for it signifies that the curse of all was shut up in Him." Turretine expresses himself as follows: "He was made the curse itself, because He underwent and endured all the curse and calamity which the law threatened to transgressors." Even De Wette admits this as the substantial force of the passage, for he says: "Christ hath purchased us by His death from the curse of the law, as He for us (whether for our behoof or in our stead is doubtful) became a curse, inasmuch, to wit, as He paid the penalty of sin which the law denounced." But no interpreter has more distinctly brought out this view of the passage than Ruckert in his comment on the place: "As appears to us," says he, "the doctrine of the substitutionary susception of another's guilt is here expressed. . . . The apostle's conclusion is this: Whosoever hangs on a tree is cursed: Christ hung on a tree; therefore Christ was cursed. But whosoever is cursed (*i.e.* bears the penalty denounced by God) is so, either on account of his own sins or on account of those of others. Now Christ suffered not for His own sins, but for those of others, namely, for those who, subject to the law, had transgressed it." Prevalent, however, as this interpretation is, it is not without its difficulties; the most serious of which seems to be that, in order to follow it, we must suppose that as we had incurred death, because the curse of a broken law was upon us, so Christ, to liberate us from that curse, took it upon Him and in consequence died; whereas Paul, instead of saying that Christ died because the curse was upon Him, says He became a curse in consequence of the peculiar manner of His death, *viz.* by crucifixion: He was not made a curse and consequently died; but He became a curse from the circum-

stance that "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Hence it has been strenuously argued by some that all that Paul intends here is to state in general that Christ, by submitting to a shameful and ignominious death, whereby He became an object of contempt and execration to the Jews, delivered us from the sentence of the law, without saying anything as to *how* that was effected. This is the view of the passage taken by all the Fathers, who earnestly argue against the idea that Paul means here that the curse came upon Christ from God, and contend that the meaning is that Christ submitted to become a curse among men that He might redeem His people. "Si proprius adspicias," says Ambrosiaster, "videbis Christum maledictum eorum factum, a quibus occisus est; crux enim Salvatoris peccatum et maledictum illorum a quibus suspensus est. . . . Ac per hoc Salvator innocens suspensus in ligno non est maledictus, sed maledictum illorum a quibus suspensus est." This seems to have been the common view of the passage up to the time of the Reformation; it is the view adopted, of course, by those who are unfriendly to the orthodox doctrine of the atonement; but it is the view adopted by many besides, who feel shut up to it by purely exegetical reasons.

Viewed merely under an exegetical aspect, the question on which the whole turns seems to be this: When Paul, after saying Christ was made a curse for us, adds the words of the citation from Deut. xxi. 23, "For it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," does he intend thereby to adduce the *cause* of Christ's becoming a curse, or the *evidence* that He had become a curse? His words may bear either interpretation. They may either mean Christ became a curse for us, *as was proved* by His dying a shameful and cursed death; or Christ became a curse for us *in consequence of* His dying a shameful and cursed death. Now, if we adopt the former of these interpretations, his words will be seen to accord entirely with the explanation of them usually embraced since the time of Luther; if the latter, we must relinquish this passage as directly proving the substitutionary death of Christ, though it will still prove the connection between that and our redemption. Which of these interpretations is to be preferred must be left very much to the judgment and feeling of each inquirer; but it must not be overlooked as materially

contributing towards a solid decision, that in the original of the passage quoted by Paul the curse is distinctly said to be from God upon those hanged: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God, or the curse of God)" (Deut. xxi. 22). Now, the meaning of this is clearly, not that God's curse rests on a man who has been hanged merely because he has been put to death in that way; but that death by hanging was inflicted only on those whose lives were forfeited to God, and who required to be offered up to Him in this way to save the land which their crime had defiled from His vengeance. A slight examination of the passages in the O. T. bearing on this subject will suffice to show this.

Thus in Num. xxv. 4 we read that when the Israelites had been betrayed into the sin of idolatry through the enticements of the Midianitish women, Moses was commanded to assemble the chiefs of the people, and to hang the transgressors up before the Lord against the sun [*i.e.* openly], that the fierce anger of the Lord might be turned away from Israel. The punishment here indicated was that which seems to have been common among several ancient nations: the culprit was first put to death and then impaled on an elevated stake, or nailed to a cross. It was a punishment reserved for heinous transgressors, and was held to express the greatness of their guilt and the abhorrence in which they were consequently held; and on this account it was appointed in the case before us, that the people might be duly impressed with a sense of the exceeding evil into which these transgressors had been seduced.<sup>1</sup>

Again, in 2 Sam. xxi. 6, 9, mention is made of the hanging of seven sons or descendants of Saul by the Gibeonites. The occasion of this was the following: A famine had come upon the land of Israel, which was for some reason regarded by David the king as sent in judgment for some sin, the

<sup>1</sup> See Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 374, and plate on p. 369. Comp. Herod. iii. 159: "Darius impaled about 3000 of the chief men of Babylon when he took it." So Pharaoh beheaded his chief baker, who had offended him, and then hanged him on a tree; and the birds of the air ate his flesh (Gen. xl. 19, 22).

guilt of which hung over the nation. On inquiring of the Lord, he was told that it was for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. David accordingly summoned the Gibeonites and demanded of them with what he should make atonement, so that the curse might be removed and a blessing come on the inheritance of the Lord. Their answer was a demand that seven of Saul's descendants—seven sons of the man that had consumed them, and sought to destroy them—should be given up to them, that they might hang them up before the Lord, and thereby make atonement for the innocent blood that Saul had shed.<sup>1</sup> This was accordingly done, and the victims were put to death and then exposed in the manner already described. Here, again, we have "hanging" brought before us as a penalty by which God's abhorrence of sin was to be indicated, and His wrath in consequence of sin averted by an atonement.

When, therefore, Moses in the law declares that he that is hanged is accursed, he must be understood to mean that the divine curse rested on the man of whose sin this was the proper punishment. Now, this being the purport of the declaration cited by St. Paul, and applied to the case of our Lord, he must be understood as meaning thereby to convey the idea that our Lord's crucifixion was indicative of or appropriate to the position He then occupied, as one on whom the divine curse due to man's sins rested. Apart from this, indeed, it is impossible to see the aptness of the apostle's citation; and this of itself is sufficient to guide us to the orthodox interpretation of the passage as the one to be preferred.

(4.) Closely connected with this passage is 2 Cor. v. 21, where it is said, "that God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us." The sin in this passage answers to the curse (*κατάρα*) in Galatians. Some, indeed, would take *ἁμαρτία* here as meaning sin-offering; but *a.* the word is never so used in the N. T.; *b.* the apostle would not use the same word in two such different senses in the same verse; and *c.* as sin here is opposed to righteousness, it can have no other than its proper meaning. What the apostle says is, that God

<sup>1</sup> The Vulg. renders, "ut crucifigamus eos," ver. 6; and "crucifixerunt eos," ver. 9.

made Him, in that which He endured, to be a bearer of sin in the sense that He, in His sufferings and death, was set forth as a sinner, was treated as such for our behoof.

(5.) To these may be added such statements as that Christ is our SURETY, our PROPITIATION (*ἱλασμός*), our PEACE (*εἰρήνη*). In all these there is implied the agency of Christ in the removal from us of sin as that which alienates us from God, exposes us to His wrath, and subjects us to the condemning sentence of His law. As our Surety, Christ appears as on the one hand our pledge to God, and on the other God's plédge to us, certifying to us that the mercy of God which we need is secured to us, and certifying to God (if we may so speak) that the submission and obedience which He demands of us as His creatures shall be rendered. As our Propitiation, Christ procures for us the favour of God, not in the sense of creating it towards us or causing it to flow forth, but in the sense of removing the obstacles which sin has placed in the way of our acceptance with the Father, by covering that sin, expiating it, atoning for it by means of sacrifice; just as the high priest of old by offering sacrifice covered the sins of the people and so made propitiation, so that the Hebrew *כִּפֹּר* is rendered by the LXX. by the Greek *ἱλασμός* or *ἐξιλασμός* (Lev. xxv. 9; Num. v. 8; Lev. xxiii. 27, 28). As our Peace, Jesus Christ brings us into a state of reconciliation with God, removing from us the condemnation of God's law by making atonement for us, and having slain the enmity by His cross, coming and preaching peace to those who are afar off as well as to those that are nigh (Eph. ii. 16, 17; Rom. v. 1). In all these respects Christ acts as a Priest, and secures the end through means of His sacrificial death.

Without dwelling further on this head, enough has been adduced to show that the most special, select, and characteristic designations of our Lord in the N. T. all turn upon His sacrificial work, all imply His sacerdotal agency, and can be properly understood and appropriately used only as we recognise in Him one who secures for men salvation, and is to them a Saviour by means of His propitiatory sacrifice.

#### 4. *Phrases designating the Design and Effect of the Work of Christ.*

I proceed now to a third class of expressions or phrases, viz. those which designate the *design* and *effect* of Christ's work on earth. And here we notice (1) those passages in which the design and effect of His work are described by the words "FOR US." Such passages are very numerous in the N. T., so numerous that it is unnecessary to quote any in particular; we meet with them everywhere, and they present the words in question to us in many different connections. The point we have to decide respects the force to be assigned to this form of expression. Here it is evident that all depends on the proper signification of the particle answering to our word "for."

Now, there are *three* distinct particles used in Greek by the N. T. writers in reference to this matter, all of which are alike rendered "for" by our translators, viz. *ἀντί*, *ὑπέρ*, and *διὰ*. We have an instance of the first in Matt. xx. 28, "to give His life a ransom *ἀντί* πολλῶν;" of the second in John x. 11, "I am that Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd layeth down His life *ὑπέρ* τῶν προβάτων;" and of the third in 1 Cor. viii. 11, "the brother for whom (*δι'* οὗ) Christ died." Respecting the first of these there is no room for dispute; it is the proper Greek word to denote the relation of exchange or substitution, so that when Christ says that He had come to give His life a ransom *ἀντί* πολλῶν, His words can only mean that He had come to redeem the many from death by dying in their stead. This, however, is the only one of the passages in which this preposition is used. In by far the greater majority it is *ὑπέρ* that is employed; and respecting this there is not the same certainty as the former. The preposition *ὑπέρ* does not necessarily involve the idea of exchange or substitution, though when used with the genitive it often has this signification. Thus, to take an instance or two from classical authorities: Plato, *Sympos.* 179 B, says of Alcectis, that she "was willing alone *ὑπέρ* τοῦ αὐτῆς ἀνδρός ἀποθανεῖν, though he had father and mother;" here *ὑπέρ* has unquestionably the force of "instead of" or "in place of," and accordingly we find Euripides, when referring to the same thing in his *Alcectis*, substituting *πρό* for *ὑπέρ*—"ἦτις ἤθελε θανεῖν *πρό* κείνου" (17). Xenoph. *Anab.* vii. 4. 9: "And

Skeuthes asked, Art thou also willing, O Episthenes, to die instead of this one (*ὑπὲρ τούτου ἀποθανεῖν*)? where that *ὑπέρ* is used in the sense of "instead of," is rendered indubitable by the substitution for it, in the same connection, a few lines farther on, of *ἀντ'*. Skeuthes asked if he should strike him "*ἀντ' ἐκείνου*, in place of the other." The *Alcestis* of Euripides contains several instances of this usage of *ὑπέρ*. In the *ὑπόθεσις* or *argumentum* prefixed to the play, the author states the subject of the drama thus: "Apollo had requested of the Fates that Admetus, who was about to die, might furnish some one who should die instead of him (*ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ*) . . ., and Alcestis, his wife, gave herself up, since neither of his parents was willing to die for their son (*ὑπὲρ τ. παῖδος*)," etc.; and in the body of the play this is frequently referred to with the use of the same preposition; as, *c.g.*, 690,—

*μὴ θεῶσχε' ὑπὲρ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐδ' ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ.*

"Die not for me, nor I for thee."

700,—

*εἰ σὺν παροῦσαν καθθανεῖν πείσεις αἰ γυναῖχ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ.*

"If thou wilt persuade thy wife here present to die instead of thee."

In all these instances there is no doubt as to the force of *ὑπέρ*, and they sufficiently show that this preposition may be used with the sense of *ἀντί*, "in room of," "in place of." When, therefore, we meet such expressions in the N. T. as the following:—Rom. v. 6: *ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανε*; v. 8: *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε*; Eph. v. 2: *παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*; 1 Pet. iii. 18: *ἔπαθε δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων*, etc,—we may with perfect legitimacy translate the preposition "in the place of." Still, it must be acknowledged that the proper force of *ὑπέρ* with the genitive is "for the behoof of," and that it comes to signify "in the place of" only where the party acting for the behoof of another does that by taking his place. In itself, therefore, this preposition determines nothing as to the *substitutionary* character of Christ's work on our behalf; it simply expresses that what He did was for our benefit, and it must be determined from other considerations whether this end was secured by His suffering in our stead or not. It must be admitted that the assertion, "Christ died for our benefit," does not necessarily mean that He died as our substitute; we can affix that meaning to the words only when we know from

other sources that such was actually the relation in which He stood to us, just as we interpret the similar phrases in the *Alcestis* of Euripides from knowing that Alcestis actually was substituted for her husband Admetus. When, however, we find our Lord Himself using the preposition *ἀντί* in the same connection, when we find it repeatedly stated that the effect of His giving Himself for our benefit, dying for our benefit, was our redemption from the penalty of sin which is death, and when especially it is stated that He gave Himself for us as a sacrifice and offering unto God, we seem to have in abundant measure the necessary knowledge supplied to us by which to determine the force of *ὑπέρ* in the instances in question. It may be added, also, that when one man is said to die for another, especially when it is specified that it was an innocent man that died for the guilty, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that the case was one in which the benefit of the latter was derived by the substitution in his place of the former, by whom the penalty incurred by the other was borne so as to deliver him from enduring it.

The same remarks will in substance apply to *διὰ* as used of those for whom Christ died. In itself this particle simply intimates that Christ died on account of or for the sake of man; but as that which rendered this interposition necessary on the part of Christ was man's exposure to the penalty due to sin, and as the benefit accruing to man from Christ's death is exemption from this penalty, it is impossible to separate in reality the one thought from the other.

(2.) Closely allied to these instances is the frequently occurring statement that Christ died "FOR SINS." The preposition here used is sometimes *ὑπέρ* and sometimes *περί*. In regard to the former of these we can adopt, in such phrases, neither the rendering "in behoof of," nor the rendering "in place of," for neither would make sense; we must take *ὑπέρ* here as denoting the ground, reason, or motive of the act, a sense in which it is frequently used. When, therefore, we read that Christ offered a sacrifice *ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν*, we must take the words as simply intimating that the sins formed the ground, occasion, or motive of Christ's sacrifice, leaving it to be determined from other passages how it was that our sins required such a sacrifice, and that what Christ did implied



what was required. The same in substance must be said respecting *περί*. This preposition with the genitive has the general meaning of "about" or "concerning," so that the phrase *περί ἁμαρτίας*, or *ἁμαρτιῶν*, simply denotes that sin formed the occasion, or object, or motive-cause of our Lord's sufferings, without saying anything as to the relation in which he stood to us whilst enduring these sufferings. The context will, however, in the vast majority of cases suffice to satisfy us that when the inspired writers used the phrase they had in their minds the idea that Christ suffered on account of sins because He stood in our room and endured a penalty which we had merited.

(3.) We may notice, next, those passages in which the effect of Christ's work is described as consisting IN THE REMOVAL OR DESTRUCTION OF SINS. This idea is presented to us in various forms of expression. Thus He is said, *αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*, or *τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν*, John i. 29, 1 John iii. 5; *ἁμαρτίας ἀναφέρειν*, Heb. ix. 28, 1 Pet. ii. 24; and to be manifested *εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας*, Heb. ix. 26. To these we may add the passage in Isa. liii. 12, where it is said of the Messiah that He *נָשָׂא רָבִים חֲטִיָּה*, "bare the sin of many." Taking these expressions in their simple and most obvious meaning, they convey the impression that our Lord took on Him the burden and penalty of our sins, and that by doing so He annihilated sin, so that it no longer lies on those who committed it, and for whom He bore it, as a condemning burden. This is confirmed by the following considerations. *a.* The phrase used by Isaiah invariably means in the O. T. to bear guilt in the sense of enduring the penalty of sin. This is stated by Gesenius (*sub voc.* נָשָׂא) as the proper meaning of the phrase, and it is amply confirmed by numerous instances in various parts of the O. T. Indeed, "to bear his iniquity" is the phrase commonly and specifically used to denote that a person was to suffer the penalty of his sin (comp. Lev. v. 1, 17, xvii. 16, etc.; Num. v. 31, etc.); and in accordance with this, when by substitution of one for another, the former delivered the latter from the penalty he had incurred by bearing it for him, the phrase used to express this came to be that "he bore his sin" (comp. Ezek. iv. 5, xiv. 10, etc.). The word which the LXX. usually employ to

represent the Hebrew  $\text{סָפַר}$  in these phrases is λαμβάνω, but occasionally they use ἀφαιρέω and also ἀναφέρω. Seeing, then, that this is the accredited meaning of the phrase in the O. T., we are constrained, on grounds of pure hermeneutics, to give it this meaning in Isa. liii. 12; and as the N. T. writers were certainly familiar with this phrasology, they must be presumed, when they use the equivalent Greek phrase, to attach to it the same meaning, the more especially as in using it they seem to have had these O. T. passages in their eye.

b. The connection in which the phrase occurs in the passages above cited leads to the conclusion that it is to be taken in a sacrificial sense. When John spoke of Christ bearing the sins of the world, it was under the figure of a lamb that he represented Him as doing this. But in what respects can a lamb be said to bear the sins of men, except as a sacrifice of atonement? With the phraseology under this aspect the education and habits of the Jews would make them readily familiar; but, abstracting from this, in what sense could they understand John's words? The idea of sacrifice apart, our Lord could be represented as a lamb only in virtue of His meekness and purity; but what appropriateness could there possibly be in the assertion that in virtue of His meekness and purity Christ bore the sins of the world? In reply to this it may be said that by His meekness and purity He set a holy example before the minds of men, and exercised on them a holy influence, the combined effect of which is to draw men from sin to goodness. But it seems hardly credible that any one should seriously offer this as a *bona fide* interpretation of the passage. For, supposing a man wishing to say of another that he should exercise a beneficial influence on the character and conduct of other men, would he, by any natural process of thought, be led to express that by declaring that he should bear these men's sins? Supposing I so influence a wicked man by my good conduct and spirit as to induce him to forsake his evil ways, would it not be absurd to describe that result by saying that I had borne his wickedness? But it may be said in reply, The verb signifies not to bear, but to bear away, and the meaning is that Jesus Christ takes away the sins of the world by persuading men to forsake sin. So the Unitarians affirm, but with no success.

For, not to insist on the consideration that by this way of interpreting the passage they coolly turn it round and *reverse* the statement, substituting for an assertion that Christ takes away the sins of the world, the assertion that Christ takes the world away from its sins;—not to insist on this, we must strongly deny that the verb here means simply to bear away. *αἵρω* properly denotes to take up, then to take upon one's self, hence to carry, to bear as a load or burden; and it is only as a derivation from this that the idea of carrying away is attached to it. What a man takes on his shoulders he usually means to carry away somewhere, and hence cases occur in which *αἵρω* signifies to carry away what is borne. But it never signifies to carry away what is not borne; it never signifies to remove or separate one thing from another absolutely or by any means. It has the meaning of removing only as dependent from the idea of bearing. Wherever, then, it is to be rendered "remove" or "separate," it is so because it involves the previous assumption of the thing removed as a load. The Unitarian translation, then, gives their cause no help here. If Christ took away the sins of the world, it was because He first took them on Him and bare them as a load in the room of sinners.

In Heb. ix. 28 and 1 Pet. ii. 24, the verb used is *ἀναφέρειν*. This verb does not so necessarily involve the idea of "bearing a load" as does *αἵρω*; it simply expresses the act of "conveying to, or up to." But it has one peculiarity in relation to our present object which *αἵρω* wants; it is used as a sacrificial word to denote the conveying of the victim to the altar (comp. Jas. ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 27); so that when the apostle says that Christ was offered to "bear the sins of many," or that He "bare our sins in His own body to the tree," it is hardly possible but that he should have had in his mind the sacrificial character of Christ's death as that which gave it efficacy to remove our sins. This is confirmed by his saying in the one passage that Christ was offered to bear our sins, a statement that comes immediately after a reference to the priestly office of Christ as contrasted with that of the ancient priests, and of His abolishing or cancelling sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and in the other passage the apostle says that Christ "bare our sins in His own body to

the tree." If the reference here were merely to His example, etc., in inducing men to forsake sin, why should Peter say that He bare our sins in His body? and why specify the cross as the terminus to which He thus bare them? On the hypothesis that Christ bare our sins as a sacrifice all this is clear and intelligible, "as the sinner, under the law, in order to be free from sin brought a sacrifice in stead of himself, so Christ took on Him the curse which we deserved by our sins in order to expiate them before God" (Calvin, *in loc.*). On the hypothesis that He bare away our sins as an example, all is confused if not absurd. Besides, let us look at what follows in Peter's statement here. He says that Christ "bare our sins in His own body unto the tree, that we, being dead to sins (*ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι* = departed from sins, dead to them), may live unto righteousness." In this latter clause he states the end or purpose of Christ's bearing our sins to be that we might be free from the controlling and contaminating power of sin, and might come under the vivifying influence of righteousness,—a doctrine which is wholly in harmony with that of Paul, who says that Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." But on what does the whole of this doctrine and mode of representation rest? Evidently on the hypothesis of a transference of our sin to Christ, and of His righteousness to us. He, the sinless, bare our sins, and by His voluntary obedience to death made propitiation for them; we, the guilty, are endowed with His righteousness, and so escape the penalty which our sins have deserved. In all this the removal of sin by sacrifice, and not the mere turning of us from it by doctrine or example, is the prominent idea in the representation. And with this falls in what the apostle adds, "by whose stripes ye were healed." The stripes here referred to are the sufferings of Christ on our behalf—not the mere scourgings or blows which He received at the hands of the rude and violent men who treated Him injuriously immediately before His death, but all that He endured at the hands of His enemies, His death itself included. By these, says the apostle, believers are healed. Sin is a disease by which men are destroyed, and for this disease healing, a cure, is furnished by the sufferings and death of Christ. What can

more clearly indicate the propitiatory, vicarious, substitutionary character of these sufferings? "That we might live," says Tauler, "He must die; that we might be made glad, He must be troubled; that we might be healed, He must be wounded; that we might be cleansed, He must pour forth His blood: the blood of the Physician was poured forth and made a medicine for the sick." "The representation," says De Wette, "is similar to that of Paul. God has nailed the handwriting of the law that was against us to the cross (Col. ii. 14), and the idea, properly expressed, is that Christ has atoned for our sins on the cross." Even Wegscheider, the coldest and most unhesitating of Rationalists, admits that in this and in similar passages the N. T. writers "exhibit the death of Jesus Christ as expiatory and vicarious, as a penalty undertaken by Him for the sins of all men."<sup>1</sup>

I cannot pass from this part of the subject without noticing particularly Matt. viii. 17, where, after recounting certain miracles of healing performed by our Lord, the evangelist says, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." The passage here cited is undoubtedly Isa. liii. 4: "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." The quotation is not verbally exact, but in substance the one passage corresponds with the other, though in the inverse order of the clauses. The first clause of the Hebrew is *וְהָיָה חַיָּתוֹ הַיָּמִינִי*, "He bare our diseases or sicknesses," to which corresponds the second clause in the Greek, *τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν*, "He carried our diseases or sicknesses." Then the second clause in the Hebrew is *וְהָיָה חַיָּתוֹ הַיָּמִינִי*, "our wounds or pains He carried them," to which corresponds the first clause in the Greek, *τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν*, "He took our sicknesses." In the LXX. the passage in Isaiah is rendered, *οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὀδυνᾶται*, where, in the first clause, sins (*ἁμαρτίας*) is substituted for diseases, as that which was borne by the person spoken of.

This passage has come to be of much importance in connection with the question as to the import of the phrase "the bearing of sins" as ascribed to Christ. The verb is the same, both when the reference is to Christ bearing the

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.* § 136, p. 437, ed. 6.

infirmities of those He healed, and when it is to His bearing the sins of men. Hence it has been argued that as Christ bare the sicknesses of those He healed only in the sense of delivering them from them, it is in the same sense that He bare our sins; this means nothing more than that He delivers men from their sins; it does not mean that in any strict sense our sins were laid upon Him, so that He as our substitute suffered the punishment due to them.

At first sight there may appear in this something plausible, and to some it has appeared of such force that they have been drawn by it to renounce the orthodox view of the atonement, which regards the bearing of our sins by Christ as meaning His suffering in our room and stead the penalty of transgression. It may occur, however, to the careful and impartial inquirer that when a certain phrase, occurring many times in Scripture, is found to have a certain definite meaning, it is hardly legitimate to overrule and set aside that meaning because the same formula in another connection is found to require a different meaning to be put upon it. If it be conceded that when our Lord is said to have borne the sicknesses of those He miraculously healed the meaning simply is that He removed them and delivered those who were afflicted by them, it surely is not logical to conclude that on this account when He is said to have borne our sins, the meaning can only be that He removes these from us by inducing us to forsake them. The two phrases are not the same, and each must be interpreted by itself uncontrolled by the other.

But does the phrase "He bare our sicknesses" mean no more than that He removed them, and delivered those afflicted by them from their affliction? Taking the declaration of the prophet by itself, is its entire meaning exhausted in the mere fact that our Lord as the Messiah delivered a few afflicted people in Judea from their afflictions? If this be all, may we not ask, Why has the prophet expressed it in so strange a way? Why say that the Messiah had *taken on Him* our infirmities and *carried* our sicknesses, if all that is meant be, that He by an exercise of His divine power drove them away from men? We never speak or think of a doctor who heals us when we are sick taking our ailments on

himself and carrying them away. Obviously such phraseology used here of the Messiah, on all fair principles of interpretation, conveys to us the idea that in some sense there was an actual transference of the infirmity and pain He cured from the sufferer to Himself. When, moreover, we look at the whole tenor and scope of the prophecy of which this forms a part, we find that its prevailing and regulative idea is that the party to whom it refers was to be the substitute for others whom He was to deliver by taking on Himself what they had to bear. Now as this is the dominant idea of the whole prophecy, all the parts of it must be in harmony with this. Hence when the prophet says, "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," there seems abundant reason for our taking his words in their proper meaning, and understanding him to assert that in some sense the Messiah was actually to take upon Him the pains and bear the afflictions of those for whom He was substituted.

Turning now to the citation and application of this ancient prophecy by the evangelist, the remarks just made prepare us to find a deeper meaning in His words than at first sight appears. We are led to understand him as asserting that in some sense our Lord actually took on Him the infirmities and sicknesses of men, and thereby, in virtue of His personally bearing them, took them away.

But in *what* sense is this to be understood? How can our Lord be said to have Himself actually borne the sickness of those whom He healed? To this it is a very imperfect answer to say that on the occasion referred to by the evangelist it can only have been by enduring great fatigue and exhaustion that our Lord at the close of a day of active exertion could have attended to such a multitude of cases of sickness and infirmity. This is true; but the same might be said of any physician in extensive practice, who must often, when his own necessities would prompt him to seek repose, deny himself this in order to attend to others; and this would never justify the language used by the evangelist. Nor will it suffice to say that the sympathy of Jesus was so intense that He entered into all the sufferings of those who came before Him to be healed, and thereby really took upon Him their afflictions. This also is true,

and this approximates more than the former to a just solution of this problem. Still, it must be confessed that were this *all*, it would hardly furnish a meaning adequate to the language which the evangelist uses. Sympathy with a sufferer may approximate us to his condition, but we can hardly say yet that it *puts* us in his condition, and *lays* his suffering on us so that we carry it. We advance a step nearer to the truth with those who think there is a reference here to a personal suffering and exhaustion endured by our Lord in performing such miracles—as if the life and health He gave to the objects of His cure went out of Himself and left His own stock of life and health less than before; so that curing disease was not with Him a mere easy effect of omnipotence, but an actual communication from His own substance of the life and health needed to restore. That this was really the case seems probable from our Lord's own expression when the woman in the crowd touched Him (Luke viii. 46), "I felt that virtue (*δύναμις*=a dynamic force) had gone forth from me;" and it seems also to throw light on and derive confirmation from our Lord's apparent agony in bringing Lazars to life again; for though the tears He shed on that occasion may be ascribed to sorrow and sympathy, yet these will not account for His having groaned in spirit—an expression implying deep mental agony—when advancing to restore His friend to life. We seem justified in believing, then, that all these miracles *cost* our Lord much, that the vital power He gave to others was drawn from Himself, so that in a very important sense He Himself actually "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." But still this idea, important as it is, does not seem to bring before us the *whole* truth on the subject. For there still remains the inquiry, *Why* did Christ thus suffer while curing others? How was it that He *needed* to do this in order to accomplish the work for which He had appeared as the Messiah? To this I reply by remarking that *a.* disease, suffering, sorrow, and death are the results of sin—the *physical* aspects of that state of which remorse, shame, and spiritual death are the *spiritual* results. *b.* In consequence of this complete salvation is deliverance from both these classes of results of sin. *c.* Our Lord came to deliver



from sin and *all* its consequences—bodily disease as well as spiritual. *d.* Our Lord effects this deliverance in virtue of having cancelled sin by His substitution; we escape from sin's results because He suffered for us. *e.* But *what* did He suffer? Not sin, but those results of sin from which He delivers us, weakness, sickness, etc., as well as spiritual darkness and distance from God. As part of the price He paid for our redemption, He bare in His own person our diseases, and took on Him our infirmities. *f.* On this rests His power to deliver. He delivers from sin, not by omnipotence, but in virtue of having been made sin. He delivers from spiritual death in virtue of having endured it, and He delivers from temporal evil in virtue of having Himself submitted to it. It is therefore literally true that "He took on Him our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," and that in virtue of this He appeared among men as the Great Healer of their bodily as well as their spiritual maladies.

5. *Passages declaring the Benefits accruing to Men from the Work of Christ.*

We come now to the last class of expressions used in the Scriptures respecting the work of Christ on our behalf, viz. that in which the *benefits* resulting to us from His work are set forth. Of these we may consider the following:—

(1.) We are said to enjoy "acceptance with God" through Christ. Thus in Eph. i. 5, 6 the apostle says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Here Paul represents the acceptance of believers by God as wholly an act of grace, and as resting for its basis on Christ, or finding its medium in Christ the beloved. His grace, he says, ἡς ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς. The ἡς here is undoubtedly used by attraction for ᾧ, and must be rendered by *in which*.<sup>1</sup> The verb ἐχαρ., formed from χάρις, can only mean "to extend grace to," "to bestow grace upon,"

<sup>1</sup> ᾧ is the reading of A and B as well as of several cursives, the Syriac, Æthiopic, etc.; but the majority of MSS. and Versions have ἐν ᾧ, which Tischendorf has adopted.

according to the analogy of verbs in *ω* formed from substantives which have the power of making the notion or idea of their substantives into a predicate of their object (*e.g.* χρυσῶω, "I gild;" θανατῶω, "I put to death," etc.). But grace has both a subjective and objective meaning, and therefore to convey grace to one may mean either to make him gracious, or to show favour to him. In the passage before us both meanings have been advocated by interpreters: some, like Chrysostom, contending that the reference here is not to the grace showed by God in pardoning sinners, but to the moral excellence conferred by God on those who believe, so that ἐχαρίτωσε is equivalent here, as Chrysostom explains it, to χαριέντας or ἐπεράστους ἐποίησεν; whilst others maintain that the reference here is to the acceptance of sinners on the ground of grace or free favour, so that ἐχαρίτωσε means, as Beza renders it, "gratis nos acceptos efficit;" or as Bengel gives it, "gratia amplexus est." The latter is undoubtedly the true interpretation of the word. It alone preserves the meaning to the word χάρις which it usually bears in the writings of Paul, and it alone falls in with the train of thought of the apostle in this context. For Paul is not speaking here of the sanctification of believers, but of their deliverance from sin, as is evident from his going on to say that our acceptance in the beloved takes effect in connection with our redemption and the remission of sins: "In whom," says he, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." The proper force of these expressions we shall examine more particularly presently; the passage is adduced at present merely to show that the subject present to the apostle's mind here is the deliverance of men from the guilt and penalty of sin. The grace, then, of which he speaks is the grace of pardon extended to the sinner; and of this Paul affirms that it is conceded to us "in the beloved," or Christ. Not, therefore, on the ground of anything in ourselves or anything proceeding from ourselves,—not on the ground that we are feeble and could not effectually resist sin, or on the ground of our repentance and begun renovation,—not on any such ground does God's grace come to us bringing pardon. That blessing comes to us in Christ, an expression which at the lowest estimate must

mean that it is on account of Christ, on account of something He is or of something He has done, that God shows us grace, but which, perhaps, finds its full explanation only in the recognition of the great truth that believers are in Christ, having communion with Him, at once in His propitiatory sufferings and in His acceptance with the Father, dying in His death, rising in His resurrection, and participating in His triumph.<sup>1</sup> Here, then, we are given clearly to understand that the meritorious ground of our pardon is in Christ, that God accepts us into His favour not on the ground of anything appertaining to us, but solely on the ground of something appertaining to Christ. Such a statement, if it does not in so many words declare the vicariousness of Christ's work on our behalf, evidently not only falls in with that hypothesis, but actually presupposes it; for how could the meritorious ground of our pardon be found in Christ, unless He had in some way satisfied the law on our behalf, and thereby procured for us exemption from the penalty of the law?

(2.) A second benefit which we are said to enjoy through Christ is redemption. This is frequently asserted in the N. T., and under different forms of expression. Believers in Christ are styled generally "the redeemed," as in Rev. xiv. 3, 4: *οἱ ἀγορασμένοι ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, οὗτοι ἡγοράσθησαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων*. In accordance with this it is said of them that they "are bought with a price;" 1 Cor. vi. 20, *ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς*, "ye were bought at a great price," or "at a price of great value,"—*τιμῇ* signifying not merely a price, but a large price, and accordingly rendered in the Vulgate here *magno pretio*. In other passages it is declared what this price is, as, e.g., 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. In like manner we read that Christ redeemed us by His blood (Rev. v. 9); that we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our sins; that through His own blood He obtained eternal redemption for us; that He is made of God unto us redemption, etc. (Eph. i. 7; Heb. ix. 12; 1 Cor. i. 30). It is to be noticed, further, that in perfect keeping with this representation Christians are spoken of as the special property of Christ, His

<sup>1</sup> "ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ, i.e. ἐν Χριστῷ, in Christ, through His mediation and our fellowship with Him, not merely on His account, as Grotius has it." Rückert, *in loc.* See also Olshausen, *in loc.*

λαὸς περιούσιος by redemption, and that this redemption or ransom was effected by His giving Himself for us (Tit. ii. 14); and the whole Church is represented as His "purchased possession" (*περιποίησις*, Eph. i. 14),—an expression which is illustrated by the words of Peter (1 Ep. ii. 9), where Christians are called λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, a people for a possession; and also by the use of the Hebrew קָנָה in Mal. iii. 17, and of which we have the explanation in Acts xx. 28, where Paul is reported as commanding the elders of the Church at Ephesus to "feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (ἦν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου).

Now, in all these passages we have the general idea of deliverance by means of a price or ransom enjoyed by Christians through Christ, and in some of them we have the fact very clearly stated that the ransom price paid whereby our deliverance is effected was His blood. The words rendered "redeemed" and "redemption" in our version are not all the same in the original. We have the verbs λυτρόω and ἀγοράζω, and we have the nouns λύτρωσις and ἀπολύτρωσις, λύτρον and τιμή, and we have, besides, the verb περιποιεῖσθαι and the corresponding noun περιποίησις. But though these words are different, they all involve the same fundamental idea, that, namely, of effecting a transference from one state or possessor to another by means of purchase. The verb ἀγοράζω signifies simply to buy; it is a purely commercial term, derived from ἀγορά, a public place where articles are exposed for sale, a market-place. The verb λυτρόω has reference to the giving of a λύτρον or ransom for the liberation of a captive or a slave. The nouns λύτρωσις and ἀπολύτρωσις are from the same root, and convey the same fundamental meaning. The verb περιποιεῖσθαι is the reflexive form of the active περιποιέω, which signifies, "I cause to remain, I reserve," hence reflexively, "I reserve for myself, I procure, I purchase;" in the LXX. it is the word used to represent the Hebrew קָנָה, the proper word to express the getting or acquiring of property. As to τιμή, the only doubt that can arise respects whether it means a great price or simply a price; that it denotes that which is paid as an equivalent for something thereby obtained admits of no doubt.

This entire body of phraseology, then, is commercial. Whether it is to be interpreted rigidly in this sense, *i.e.* whether in the strict commercial acceptation of the words the death of Christ is to be regarded as the *quid pro quo* in our redemption, is a question for after consideration; but that in some sense, strictly or with a permissible latitude, these statements must be taken as affirming that our Lord's death furnished the ground on which we are liberated from the penalties of sin, it would seem a negation of all faith in the force of words as expressive of thoughts to deity. But if the Lord Jesus Christ has been made our redemption, if He has redeemed and purchased us from the penalty and bondage of sin to be a people unto Himself, and if He has effected this by His blood, by His death,—then, beyond all reasonable question, the sufferings of Christ have been the medium of our deliverance, and His work for us has been a vicarious and propitiatory work.

(3.) Another class of passages in which the benefit of Christ's work to us is described, consists of those in which it is set forth as the source of reconciliation to us with God. This idea is variously expressed in the N. T. Sometimes it is presented under the aspect of a bringing us nigh unto God, as when Peter says that Christ "suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God," *ἵνα ἡμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ Θεῷ* (1 Pet. iii. 18); or when Paul says, "Having boldness adequate to an entrance of the holies by the blood of Jesus, . . . let us draw nigh with a true heart," etc., Heb. x. 19; or, as he expresses it still more generally (Eph. ii. 13), "Ye who were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ;" in all which passages the language is probably borrowed from the O. T. phraseology regarding the priests as those who draw nigh unto God, and regarding the sacrifices as the medium by which men draw nigh unto God. Closely allied to this form of phraseology is the expression repeatedly used by the apostle, that through Christ we enjoy an introduction to God and His favour, as in Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12. Another form in which this truth is presented is that of our having "peace with God" through Christ: Rom. v. 1; Col. i. 20; Eph. ii. 14 (comp. Isa. liii. 5). The same truth is still more explicitly taught perhaps in those passages which represent reconciliation with God as the

fruit to us of Christ's work, as Rom. v. 11, xi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

Now, it is impossible to look at these statements without feeling convinced that the apostles meant to teach that the work of Christ on earth, and especially His death on the cross, form the great procuring cause of our restoration to a state of harmony with God. All must admit that the obstacles, whatever they were, which lay in the way of that harmony, have been removed by Christ, and that He removed them by His blood, by His death. This much the mere form in which the apostles have couched their statements constrain all who respect their authority to admit. But a question may arise as to what the obstacles were which Christ removed, and on which side they lay, whether on that of God or on that of men. Were they obstacles arising from unsatisfied claims of God's justice against us, or did they arise from our ungodly and rebellious feelings towards God? On this question different sides are taken by the upholders of our Lord's propitiatory death and their opponents. The latter contend that the obstacles were solely on the side of man; and they maintain that this view is favoured by the fact that in no case is God said to be reconciled to man, but invariably that man is said to be reconciled unto God. On this it may be observed,—

*a.* That whilst it is quite true that in no case is God said to be reconciled to man, it by no means follows from this that the only obstacles to reconciliation were on the part of man. For there is this peculiarity in the case, that God, the offended party, is the *author* of reconciliation; He has graciously taken the initiative in this matter; all things are of Him in the scheme of redemption. This being the case, it might with perfect propriety be said that He reconciled the world to Himself, though it was not on the side of man, but on His own side that the main difficulty lay in securing such reconciliation. In fact, how otherwise could the truth be expressed? Had the apostles given prominence to the statement that the death of Christ was designed to reconcile God to men, they might thereby have thrown into the shade their own cardinal doctrine, that the entire scheme of human salvation is the result of God's free, spontaneous love to the guilty.

b. Though it is nowhere said that God is reconciled to men, it is frequently said that the anger of God against men has been turned away by Christ. Now, if by the anger of God against sinners be understood His judicial displeasure against them expressed in the condemnatory sentence of His holy law, and if by the turning away of that wrath be understood the satisfying of judicial requirements on the behalf of the sinner, so that God may honourably forgive him his sin, wherein consists the difference between such statements and the statement that God has been reconciled to men? The sacred writers may have seen meet to avoid such a statement for the sake of giving greater prominence to their doctrine of the divine origin of the reconciliation which has been effected through Christ, but they have substantially said the same thing in other words in other places; and, as Dr. Wardlaw says, "it is not about the *word* we dispute, but about the *thing*."<sup>1</sup>

c. When the apostles describe our reconciliation to God as a bringing nigh unto God of those that were afar off from Him, as an obtaining by sinners of peace with Him, as an introduction into His favour of those who were His enemies, we are naturally directed by such language to regard the obstacles which lay in the way of reconciliation, and which Christ has removed, as obstacles rather on the side of God than on the side of men. Such language presents to us the conception of men needing restoration to God, but unable to obtain it because of difficulties in their way, rather than of God desiring man's return to Him, but unable to secure it because of man's unwillingness to be at peace with Him. If I say, "My friend has made peace for me with the sovereign, and through him I have been brought into my sovereign's favour," the meaning surely is not that I was unwilling, and my friend persuaded me, to be at peace with my sovereign; but that my friend by persuasion, or some other means, procured for me the privilege of returning to a state of amity and favour with my sovereign.

d. The emphasis laid in all the passages referring to this subject on the *death* of Christ, as that by which the reconciliation was effected, favours the view that the obstacles to be surmounted were of a judicial kind. On this hypothesis we can

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 243.

at once see the meaning and force of such a representation, but on the other hypothesis it is by no means easy to see even its propriety. If the obstacles were solely on the part of man, such as his ungodliness and carnal enmity to God, why was it needful that Christ should *die* in order to remove them, or how came His *blood* to be the great solvent by which they were made to disappear? Surely His life, His doctrine, His lovely character, His noble example, in short, the moral urgency of His manifestation on earth, rather than the tragical end of His career, are the means by which the obduracy of men is to be overcome, if this be *all* that stands in the way of reconciliation. Why, then, have the apostles hardly alluded to these, while they continually lay stress on His death as the great efficient means of our reconciliation with God? His death, it is true, formed part of the great whole of what He exhibited to the contemplation of men for their spiritual benefit, and it adds impressiveness to the lesson taught by all the other parts; but, after all, on the hypothesis we are opposing, its place, as compared with theirs, is a subordinate one, and we cannot account for the apostles referring to it as they do were that hypothesis the true one.

c. In speaking of the reconciliation of man to God the apostles are careful to state that it is a boon conferred by God and received by us. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 18). "By whom [Christ] we have *received* the reconciliation" (Rom. v. 11). Now, what does language like this mean on the hypothesis that the sole effect of Christ's work was to *induce* us to be reconciled to God? If I say, "God has given me health," or if I say, "I have received this as a boon," who would imagine my meaning to be that I had been induced to accept this blessing from God? Would not the meaning rather be that I, needful of this blessing, and unable to secure it of myself, had obtained it as a gift from God? And if it were added that I had obtained it through the mediation and merits of another, who would imagine that the meaning was that the efforts of that other had been expended in order to induce me to accept the boon? Would not common sense dictate that the meaning was that he had availed to procure for me a blessing I was not myself able or worthy to procure?



*f.* Great stress is laid by those we are now opposing on the language of the apostle in Rom. v. 10, where he says, *ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ Θεῷ*, being enemies, we were reconciled to God. Here, they contend, is a plain case that ought to settle the meaning of such phraseology. We being enemies to God, *i.e.* opposed in heart and life to Him, have been reconciled to Him; what can this mean, but that we have been persuaded and drawn out of the state of hostility in which we were into a state of amity? This seems plausible, but the conclusion is not quite so certain as those who enunciate it would have us to believe. For both the terms of the proposition here are ambiguous. To *ἐχθροί* we must supply, to complete the meaning, the words *τοῦ Θεοῦ*. But the phrase *ἐχθροί τ. Θε.* may be taken either actively, *i.e.* hostile to God, or passively, the objects of God's hostility. In the latter acceptance it is used Rom. xi. 28, where it stands contrasted with *ἀγαπητός*, and the probability is that such is its meaning in the passage before us, as even Reiche, Meyer, and Fritzsche admit, not to cite commentators of avowed evangelical sentiments. At any rate, it is utterly incompetent for those on the other side to assume that it is here used actively, as if no other meaning were possible. Then, with respect to the verb *καταλλάσσεσθαι* here used, it may mean, when followed with the dative of a person, "to be reconciled" to that person, either in the sense of giving up enmity to him, or in the sense of being no longer regarded by him with enmity. In Hellenistic Greek the latter is the more common meaning of the two; indeed, it is doubtful if a single decided instance can be adduced either from the LXX. or the N. T. in which it has the former signification. As instances of the latter we may cite the following: 2 Macc. v. 20 (comp. vii. 33, viii. 29); Matt. v. 24. These instances are quite decisive as to the legitimacy of such a meaning being attached to the phrase; and seeing there is a lack of any clear instance on the other side, it is altogether incompetent for our opponents to assume that the meaning they would put on the word is the *only* admissible one. As far as usage goes, the presumption is that it is not the meaning of the word at all.

*g.* What confirms this is, that in the passages in the N. T. where the word is used in reference to God the connection is such as usually to determine the meaning to be the removal

of obstacles on His part to the pardon and acceptance of sinners. Thus, to take the passage in 2 Cor. v. 18, etc., which is commonly cited as most clearly favouring the other view, we find Paul distinctly asserting that the means by which God reconciles men to Himself is by not imputing their trespasses to them. It is the non-imputation of sin, then, to the transgressors, the not holding them liable to the penalties their guilt has merited, that constitutes the means of reconciliation. It was the transgressions of men that formed the obstacle, the removal of which is necessary to reconciliation, and when accomplished actually results in that. The inference is obvious. The reconciliation in question has been accomplished by Christ, not by moral influences brought to bear on men so much as by the removal of judicial obstacles which lay in the way of their access unto God.

h. It is not meant by this to exclude the moral influence of the death of Christ in touching the hearts of men and drawing them to God. On the contrary, one great advantage of the view we have espoused is that it does not exclude the other, whilst if the other be accepted as the prominent meaning of the apostle's words it necessarily becomes the only one, and excludes the idea of judicial reconciliation altogether. We believe that there are obstacles on the side of the sinner as well as on the side of God, and that the death of Christ has power to overcome the one as it has had power to remove the other. It removes the obstacles on man's side, however, indirectly, while it has removed those on God's directly; or rather let us say it removes the former through the latter, the great moral power of Christ's death arising from its having secured for sinners the free pardon of their sin by God, and the enjoyment of His favour.

I have now finished the survey I proposed to make of Scripture utterances relative to the work of Christ on earth. I have not attempted to examine all the passages containing such utterances, but have rather sought to present characteristic instances under each of the heads into which they may be classified. The result of our scrutiny cannot but tend to confirm us in the belief in the doctrine of the propitiatory merits of Christ as a sacrifice offered to God for man's sins.

We have seen that not only is He spoken of by the apostles as a sacrifice, not only that He is described as really accomplishing what the ancient sacrifices accomplished only symbolically, but on a more minute examination of passages we have seen that the terms used to designate Him, in His relation to us, all rest on His sacrificial work, that the terms descriptive of Him in respect of His work on earth all have the same reference, that the terms and phrases used to describe the design and effect of His work all point to the same conclusion, and that the expressions used to describe the benefits resulting to men from His work all convey the same truth. What remains for us but to receive and earnestly to contend for this as the teaching of Scripture?—a teaching so plain and so often presented to us in varying forms, that it seems incredible that any with the Bible in their hands and free from the blinding influence of prejudice should come to any other conclusion.<sup>1</sup>

6. It may tend to confirm us in this conviction, besides being interesting in itself, if I cite the testimony of one or two men of unimpeachable scholarship and ability whose relations to evangelical truth were such as to free them from any bias or prepossession in favour of orthodox belief on this subject. And, first, I quote the statement of the late Dr. Wegscheider, who may be regarded as the Coryphæus of the old Rationalist party in Germany, whose opposition to evangelical truth is well known. In stating what he calls the *Doctrina Biblica* on the subject of Christ's expiatory work, after referring to the Jewish notions of sacrificial atonement, and stating that the Jews do not seem to have connected these with the Messiah (a statement to which we, of course, demur), he proceeds thus: "By the N. T. authors, however, this opinion was approved, and they transferred that famous prophecy in Isa. liii. to Jesus. . . . Whence, by almost all the sacred writers, in order to remove the odium and ignominy of the punishment endured by Jesus Christ, it was so expounded, especially by Paul, that they showed the death of Jesus Christ as expiatory and also vicarious, as if

<sup>1</sup> See Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Atonement as taught by Christ and by His Apostles*, 2 vols. Schmid's *Biblical Theology of the N. T.*, translated in Clark's Series.

the punishment incurred by the sins of all had been taken by Him on Himself, and that Jesus as a lamb, pure and immaculate, was destined by the Father Himself to death as a piacular victim, who by His own blood washed away the sins of the world. They seem, therefore, to have attributed to the very obedience or virtue of Jesus a certain vicarious efficacy, whilst the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews asserts that whatever pertains to piacular sacrifices is accomplished by Christ in the heavenly temple. And clearly do all these writers assert that pardon of sins is granted to men by God, on the ground of no deed of theirs, or of any other cause save the vicarious death of Christ alone, which they refer to God's supreme love for men."<sup>1</sup>

In these words we have the impartial testimony of a man who viewed the apostolical writings simply in the light of ancient books, the meaning and doctrine of which were to be explored, but by whose authority the free intellect of man was in nowise to be bound. With equal distinctness speaks another Rationalist divine, Dr. Von Ammon, on this head: "When the divine Teacher perceived that the end of His life was at hand, He compares His death, which elsewhere He teaches that He endured for the truth and the advantage of His followers, to a piacular sacrifice, by which was borne as a vicarious burden the punishment due to the sinner; and this comparison apostles and teachers in lengthened line have followed. For Paul teaches that Jesus was destined by the Father Himself as a piacular victim; Peter calls Him a lamb pure and immaculate; John declares that by His blood the sins of the world are washed away; the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes that all things that pertain to the sacrifices offered for sin are performed by Jesus in the heavenly temple."<sup>2</sup> This is the testimony of one who goes on to apologise for such statements as accommodations to the weakness of those whom the apostles had to teach, and who required to be conducted to higher and purer notions of religion by means of images and allegories, but which are by no means to be imitated by Christian teachers now, who are to avoid "a gaping admira-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Christ. Dog.*, 6th ed. pp. 437, 438.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa Theol. Christianæ*, 4th ed. pp. 282, 283.

tion of the letter of the dogma, lest they sink to the bloody ministry of the Levites."

Dr. Karl Hase of Jena, one of the ablest of German Rationalists, in his anonymous work, *Hutterus Redivivus*, or *Dogmatik of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, has given the following summary of the doctrine of the N. T. concerning the work of Christ: "In the N. T. Christ is set forth as sent by God to save the world ruined by sin. As the subjective condition of the salvation to be enjoyed through Him, there must be repentance, conversion, and heart purity; as the condition of God's giving salvation or pardoning sin, the whole life of Christ on earth, in its separate moments, above all, His death as a ransom-price for our sins, as a sin-offering in our stead, in virtue of which we are redeemed from the bondage of sin, and obtain forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and peace with God," etc.

I shall only cite one other testimony—that of De Wette, one of the greatest of modern German theologians, whether in respect to accuracy of learning, clearness of interpretation, or comprehensiveness and ingenuity of reasoning, though unhappily far from acquiescing in evangelical truth as taught in the Bible. In one of his earlier works, in giving a digest of what the apostles taught concerning Christ's work, he expresses himself as follows: "The redemption which is through Christ consists in reconciliation with God, or in deliverance from the wrath of God and from condemnation; more specifically (1) in the forgiveness of sins, i.e. the purification of the conscience from the feeling of guilt; (2) in deliverance from the feeling of sinfulness; hence (3) in trust in God; (4) deliverance from death, the punishment of sin, and the enjoyment of eternal life, and hope of eternal felicity;" and farther on he says: "Christ has saved men principally by what He has done and suffered. . . . The death of Christ Jesus is the central point of apostolic doctrine, and especially of that of Paul." And among the effects which he says are ascribed in the N. T. to the death of Christ, he enumerates His bearing, though innocent, the curse of the law, and thereby ransoming man therefrom. "This death," he adds, "Jesus, the blameless and sinless, endured for the sins of men, accomplishing thereby in the higher sense what the

sin-offerings of the O. T. were intended to accomplish, as a voluntary sin-offering, well-pleasing to God, as the self-offering of the High Priest."<sup>1</sup> In a work published not long before his death, De Wette expresses himself in reference to the offering of Christ as follows: "The sin-offering of Christ is a true and potent one, since He as man, in His death endured, though innocent, the punishment of sin. It thus enters into a real relation to us men and our necessities, the more especially that He has also atoned for our sins; for, from love to the human race, to deliver it from error and from sin, He undertook the strife with the sinners and the foes of truth, opposed Himself to the stream of sin, suffered its waves to go over Him, and so made the world's sins His own; and still more from this, that He endured this, not as an individual, but as one who united in Himself the most perfect human gifts and powers with the fullest love to the human race, and the most comprehensive human consciousness, so that with justice He is held as the *Substitute of mankind*."<sup>2</sup> Those statements are not quoted as if they presented the best possible statement of revealed truth on the subject, but simply as indicating how to men of free and unbiassed minds the doctrine of Christ's propitiatory, sacrificial, and substitutionary work on our behalf commends itself as the doctrine undoubtedly taught by the sacred writers.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### (iv.) *Theories of Christ's Sacrifice*—THE ATONEMENT.

We may now proceed on the assumption that we have sufficiently proved from Scripture the doctrine of the propitiatory, sacrificial, and substitutionary work of Christ on behalf of men. The question now arises: In what form and under what conditions may this doctrine be construed to the

<sup>1</sup> *Biblische Dogmatik*, 3rd ed. p. 256 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Das Wesen des Christlichen Glaubens*, p. 292.

understanding as a theological dogma? What are the principles of moral truth that underlie it? What peculiarities in the relation between God and man does it contemplate, and how does it propose to deal with them? And in what form may the dogma be best enunciated so as on the one hand to render full respect to the statements of Scripture, and on the other to harmonize these with the unalterable convictions of the human reason? In short, What is the *rationale* of this doctrine?

The proposal of these questions brings before us the subject of THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST as a theological dogma, for it is by this that theologians have proposed to construe rationally or scientifically the statements of Scripture in respect of Christ's priestly work on our behalf.

In treating of this subject there are *three* questions which demand consideration. The first relates to the *Nature* of the Atonement, the second to the *Necessity* of the Atonement, and the third to the *Extent* of the Atonement. These three we are able to separate in thought; for under the first we inquire into the kind of satisfaction which was rendered by Christ as the propitiation for man; under the second we inquire whence arose the need for such a satisfaction being rendered; and under the third we inquire, For whose benefit or on whose behalf was this satisfaction rendered?—of some or of all? But, though thus separable in thought, it is hardly possible to conduct an investigation into any of them by itself and apart from the rest. For they so stand connected that our answer to one will involve our answer to the others, or presuppose it. Hence we find that among the diversities of opinion that subsist on this subject, there is hardly anything like a mingling of the opinion of one school on one of the points in question with the opinion of another school on any of the other points. The various answers to the questions all lie in parallel lines; they never cross or homologate. Thus, for instance, the advocates of an atonement of limited sufficiency hold also that the atonement of Christ was of the nature of a *quid pro quo*, a strict commercial transaction in which so much was given for so much; and with this stands inseparably connected the opinion that the necessity of this arose from the commutative justice of God. These three opinions stand in close logical connection with

each other, so that any man adopting one of them would be led in simple dialectical consistency to adopt the rest. On the other hand, if we embrace the opinion that the atonement was of unlimited sufficiency, we must exclude the idea of its being of the nature of a commercial transaction, and we must seek the necessity for it in something else than God's commutative justice. Under these circumstances it seems better, instead of pushing each of these questions separately, to take up the whole answer which each school has given to the question, What is the just theory of the Atonement?

### 1. *History of Opinion.*

As preparatory to this, it may be of advantage to take a brief survey of the history of opinion on this subject. This must be necessarily brief and cursory, touching upon only the more prominent points, and marking the successive stages of speculation, without entering into details or dwelling on minor specialities.

(1.) In the early ages of Christianity little or nothing was done towards the construction of any speculative theory on the subject of the atonement, or even towards any dogmatical expression of orthodox belief on that subject. The primitive Christians contented themselves with following closely the language of the apostles upon this subject, and seldom went beyond speaking in the most general terms of the way of salvation through Christ. "The Lord," says Barnabas,<sup>1</sup> "sustained to deliver His body into exile that we may be sanctified by remission of sins, which is by the sprinkling of His blood." "The Son of God, being Lord, and being about to judge the living and dead, suffered, that His stroke might make us alive." "Let us with intent eyes look at the blood of Christ," says Clement of Rome, "and let us see how it was precious to the Father, because being poured forth on account of our sin, it brought to the whole world the grace of repentance." "The Lord hath received us in love, on account of the love which He had for us. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, by the will of God gave His blood for us, even His flesh for our flesh, His soul for our soul."<sup>2</sup> "Let us constantly persevere

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* ch. v. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Cor.* i. 7, 49.



in our hope," says Polycarp, "and the earnest Surety of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, who took away our sins in His own body on the tree."<sup>1</sup> "He gave up His own Son," says the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 9), "as a ransom for us, the holy for the transgressors, the sinless for the wicked, the just for the unjust, the incorruptible for the mortal. What else than this righteousness could have covered our sins? By what was it possible for us transgressors and ungodly to be justified except by the Son of God alone? Oh, sweet transposition! oh, plan not to be explored! oh, unexpected benefits! that the transgression of many should be concealed in one righteous, the righteousness of one should justify many transgressors." These may be taken as specimens of the way in which the early Christians refer to the effects of our Saviour's work, and the benefits thence accruing to mankind; nor will any statements of a more precise kind be found, I apprehend, in the writings of the early Christians. In these, however, we may observe the distinct recognition not only of the derivation to men of benefit from the work of Christ, but of the vicarious character of that work on our behalf. "Every interpretation of this passage," says Dorner, speaking of the passage cited from Clement of Rome, "is forced which does not recognize in it the idea of substitution."<sup>2</sup> Some dim traces also may perhaps be found of the doctrine which, at a much later period, came to be received as the just expression of the truth on this head—the doctrine of Christ's death as a satisfaction for sin. The word "satisfactus" itself even occurs as applied to God in this connection in Tertullian's tract, *De Pudicitia* (c. 9), where, speaking of the returning sinner, he says, "He remembers his Father, God, returns to Him satisfied (*satisfacto reddit*), receives his pristine robe, even that state Adam by transgression lost." In what sense Tertullian uses the term "satisfactus" here, may be determined from the usage of the term "satisfactio" in the Roman law. It meant the amends which a transgressor paid to justice, or to the person he had wronged, either by suffering the due penalty, or by giving something,

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Phil.* 8.

<sup>2</sup> *On the Person of Christ*, Div. I. vol. i. p. 98. Clark's Foreign Theological Library.

paying some fine, or doing some service, in order to escape punishment; and the injured party, or the party administering the law, was said to be thereby "satisfactus." When Tertullian, therefore, applies this term to God, he must intend to convey the idea that God, as the administrator of His law, has received some amends or compensation, such as has satisfied for man's transgression. Now, it is true, there is nothing in the passage to connect this with the work of Christ, nor does Tertullian formally intimate anywhere that he viewed the work of Jesus Christ as having made legal amends for man's transgressions. He simply says here that the sinner may now return to God as having received satisfaction for sin. At the same time, it is important to find the idea of satisfaction on the part of God so distinctly recognized as it is here; and it may be further remarked that though there is no reference here to Christ or His work, yet it is not easy to conceive to what else Tertullian *could* refer the satisfaction which God is said to have received, seeing he does not refer it to the endurance by man of the legal penalty, nor suppose that the mere act of return is the satisfaction God seeks. The "Deus satisfactus" to whom the prodigal is to return, is one whose "satisfactio," already obtained, is the prodigal's *encouragement* to return, not that which his returning is to effect. In such a case, what but the work of Christ remains as the means by which the satisfaction was effected?

A strange notion seems to have hovered dimly in the minds of some of the Fathers as to Christ's death having been a compensation to the devil for man's redemption. They seem to have thought that as a captive is redeemed by his ransom being paid to his captor, and as man is the slave of Satan, so it was to Satan that the payment was due by which man was to be set free. Thus Irenæus says: "Since the apostasy (*i.e.* the Apostate Power, Satan) unjustly ruled over us, and since by nature we belonged to God, he alienated us to an unnatural state by making us his own disciples; the potent Word of God justly turned against the apostasy itself, redeeming those things which were His own from it, not by force, as he in the beginning dominated over us."<sup>1</sup> In this passage it cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hæc.* v. 1. 1.

be said that the doctrine in question is very clearly expressed; and as Irenæus elsewhere says, when speaking of our being reconciled to God through Christ paying our debts, that "we were indebted to none other than to Him whose law we had broken," and explains the petition in our Lord's Prayer, "forgive us our debts," as referring to our transgressions of God's precept, it is certain that if he held the notion at all that Christ ransomed us by giving satisfaction to Satan, he did not view this as a *complete* account of the effect of our Saviour's work.<sup>1</sup> The opinion in question is more clearly affirmed by Origen. "To whom," says he, speaking of Christ, "did He give His soul as a ransom-price for many? Not unto God. To whom, then, but to the wicked one? For he dominated over us until the ransom-price was given to him for us," etc.;<sup>2</sup> and again he says, "If, then, we were bought with a price, as Paul affirms (1 Cor. vii. 23), we were beyond doubt bought from some one whose servants we were, and who proposed the price which he was willing to accept for setting free those whom he held. But it was the devil who held us, to whom we had been drawn aside by our sins. He therefore demanded as our price the blood of Christ."<sup>3</sup> Origen appears along with this to have had some idea of Satan's having been *outwitted* (*ἀπαρτηθεῖν*) in this matter, from his imagining that he could obtain and keep mastery over the soul of Christ, and not perceiving that this was beyond his power.<sup>4</sup> All this shows how crude were the notions even of this great man on this subject; and how far even the greatest thinkers and teachers in the early Church were from any just theory as to the purpose and effect of Christ's death. In other parts of his writings Origen seems to regard the effect of Christ's death as wholly *moral*; as consisting in the moral influence which such an event was calculated to exert on man's mind.

By others of the Fathers our Lord's work is represented as a battle with Satan, the result of which was our rescue from his grasp; so Gregory Nazianzen, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory the Great, etc. The first of these repudiates with indignation—"φῆν τῆς ὕβρεως"—the notion that Christ's death was a

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hær.* v. 16. 3; 17. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Comment. in Matt.* xx. 23, p. 726.

<sup>3</sup> *In Ep. ad Rom.* p. 495c.

<sup>4</sup> *Comment. in Matt.*, passage above cited.

λύτρον to the devil, and says that the λύτρον was rendered to God "on account of the dispensation (οἰκονομίαν) and the necessity of man's being sanctified by the human (i.e. the incarnation and passion) of God that He might deliver us, having by his power conquered the tyrant, and might bring us to Him through the mediation of His Son."<sup>1</sup>

In the writings of Athanasius we find the idea of a satisfaction to God's law, as that by which Christ's death became effectual for our salvation, brought forward. He argues that God having threatened death as the penalty of sin, was bound to inflict it on man as a sinner, and that it was only by the Logos becoming incarnate and dying for us that this necessity could be avoided. He speaks of the Logos incarnate as rendering by His death *ἱκανὸν ἀντὶ πάντων*, "a satisfaction for all;" and speaks of Him as bringing His body as an *ἀντίψυχον*, "an equivalent for life," and thereby fulfilling for all what was owing by them through His death.<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Hilary speaks of Christ's passion as being voluntary, endured in order that satisfaction might thereby be made for the penalty that was due.<sup>3</sup> And Ambrose says, "He endured death that the sentence might be fulfilled, and He might satisfy justice by the curse of sinful flesh even unto the death."<sup>4</sup> Cyrill of Alexandria teaches the same doctrine, and so do others of the later Fathers; the idea of satisfaction and sacrificial substitution becoming apparently more clearly defined and distinctly recognized as the thoughts of men were more firmly directed to this subject. It was reserved, however, for a writer at a much later period to work out this idea thoroughly and present a theory of the atonement based on principles of a juridical kind, which in substance has been the prevailing theory ever since. I refer to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 11th century, in whose treatise, entitled, *Cur Deus Homo?* there is developed the theory of the atonement of which I speak.

(2.) This remarkable man, whose name is associated in the history of our country with the cause of priestly and papal domination, of which he was the pertinacious and ever watchful advocate, was originally a monk in the Abbey of Bee in

<sup>1</sup> *Orat.* xlii. p. 691c.

<sup>2</sup> *In Ps.* liii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *De Incarnatione*, c. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *De fuya Sac.* c. 7.

Normandy, and was elevated to the See of Canterbury in 1093. He was by birth an Italian, and possessed all the acuteness of intellect by which scholars of that nation are commonly distinguished. He brought to his new and elevated station a high reputation for sanctity as well as learning; and his life had been previously so much that of the secluded and studious monk, that we can give full credit to his professions of unwillingness to accept the honour which was pressed upon him when summoned to succeed his friend Lanfranc in the unquiet dignity from which death had relieved him. With Anselm's conduct as a churchman and politician we have here nothing to do. It is to his efforts and labours as a theologian that the theologian turns with interest and admiration.

His views of the atonement are developed in a work on the incarnation entitled, *Cur Deus Homo?* This work seems to have been commenced whilst he was at Bec, but it was not finished till some time after he was removed to Canterbury. The first book, transcribed by a Brother Ermer, was sent to his former associates at Bec in 1094. His disputes with the king and other public distractions prevented his continuing the work; nor was it till his exile in 1098 that he found the necessary time and leisure for this work. Banished by William Rufus, he retired to Italy, and there in a house belonging to one of his former pupils, John, Abbot of St. Salvator in Telesco, he quietly resumed and finished this treatise. The whole work was revised on his return to England, and transcribed by the monks at Canterbury. It made its appearance in a complete form in 1104.

The work is in the form of a dialogue, which form, Anselm says, he has adopted "*quoniam ea quæ per interrogationem et responsionem investigantur, multis et maxime tardioribus ingeniis magis potent et ideo plus placent*" (i. 1). The interlocutors are Anselm himself and the monk Boso, who occupies the place of the inquirer in this colloquy, whilst Anselm reserves to himself that of respondent ("*Boso querat et Anselmus respondet*"). He has divided it into two books, and the summary of his treatise is this: After a prologue, in which he lays down some general principles and refers to some erroneous views of the atonement, he proceeds to develop his views on the subject of satisfaction. This he defines as

not merely a rendering to God of the honour due to Him, but a doing of something which shall make up for that dishonour done to Him by sin: "Debet omnis qui peccat honorem quem rapuit Deo solvere; et hæc est satisfactio quam omnis peccator debet Deo facere" (i. 11). Without such satisfaction, he contends, sin cannot be forgiven; it is the *conditio sine qua non* of such forgiveness. He then proceeds to show that man cannot render to God this satisfaction for sin, and that unless it be rendered for him he must perish. From this he advances to show that only the God-man crucified could render the due satisfaction, and so take away the sins of the world. He thus accounts for the Incarnation, and establishes the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction as the ground of our acceptance with God. His idea is that our Lord as God-man by submitting to death rendered spontaneously an act of homage to the divine law so immense that He thereby acquired such an infinite merit, that it is sufficient to entitle all to whom He shall please to extend it to salvation. "Whom more justly shall He make heirs of a claim which He Himself does not need and of the overflow of His fulness than those, His parents and brethren, whom He sees bound by so many and so great debts wasting by want in the depths of misery, so as that they shall be exempt from what they owe for sins, and shall receive what, because of sin, they want" (ii. 19)? He thus, as he believes, has proved that the mercy of God, which seemed to have perished when only His justice and man's sin were looked at, "is so great and so accordant with justice that it cannot be thought greater or more just" (ii. 20), and has laid a firm basis on which all may be invited to approach unto God, provided they come as God has appointed (ii. 19).

Baur pronounces this theory of Anselm "a fine specimen of the dialectico-speculative acuteness of the Scholastics,"<sup>1</sup> and there can be no doubt that it laid the basis for the views which have in later times passed as alone orthodox regarding the nature of our Lord's work on our behalf. His doctrine, however, as developed by himself, cannot be accepted as satisfactory. He has, in fact, mixed two different theories as to the work of Christ which are not compatible with each

<sup>1</sup> *Veröhnungslehre*, p. 189, quoted by Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doct.* ii. p. 40.

other. According to the one, sin, being an infraction of the divine honour, could be forgiven only when God was appeased by that honour being restored to Him of which sin had, as it were, deprived Him. According to the other, sin being a positive act of iniquity, by which God's rights were invaded, justice required that legal satisfaction should be rendered ere the sin could be forgiven. There are here obviously two distinct grounds on which the need of atonement for man's sin is rested—the ground of honour and the ground of justice. Now these two cannot both hold in respect of the same necessity. Honour is a personal consideration of which law takes no cognizance, an injury which therefore cannot involve any question of justice. Justice, on the other hand, is a legal consideration, and when it comes up it supersedes all considerations of a purely personal kind. It is further to be observed that on neither of the grounds adduced by Anselm can the *necessity* of satisfaction or atonement ere sin could be forgiven be demonstrated. For, if it was merely the divine honour that sin insulted, there seems no reason why God, of His grace and majesty, might not have forgiven the sinner without satisfaction, just as an earthly sovereign might magnanimously forgive a personal insult without demanding any compensation for the offence thereby done to his honour. If, on the other hand, the rule of justice as expressed by Anselm implies that man can receive from God the gift of pardon only after there has been restored to God what the sinner has taken away from Him, this principle belongs solely to the sphere of *private rights*. The question is one simply of contract or debt, in which God, the Creditor, demands of man the payment of what he owes, or an equivalent, before He will give him a discharge. But as the generous and large-hearted master in our Lord's parable forgave his servant all his debt, one does not see why God, the all-merciful and all-bountiful, might not forgive to man his debts without asking any compensation or satisfactory equivalent. Anselm therefore cannot be regarded as having solved the great problem to which he addressed himself. To him, however, belongs the merit of being the first clearly to present the problem itself, and to indicate the direction in which a solution of it is to be found.

In his own time Anselm did not find general acceptance of his doctrine, nor among his immediate successors. His principal opponent was Abaelard, whose doctrinal standpoint was such as to induce him to attach supreme importance to the merely moral aspect and efficacy of our Lord's work. Starting from this, he strenuously opposed the idea that Christ came to redeem man from the power of the devil, whose hold over men, being a mere act of usurpation, needed no redemption to loosen it. What man needed to be delivered from was the love and power of sin, and this Christ effected by assuming our nature, teaching us truth, and setting an example of true obedience even unto death. "By this," says Abaelard, "He has bound us to Himself by love, so that, inflamed by so great a benefit of divine grace, our love to Him shall not shrink from enduring anything for His sake." "Therefore," he adds, "our redemption is that supreme love in us, produced by the passion of Christ, which not only frees us from the servitude of sin, but acquires for us the true liberty of the sons of God, so that we fulfil all things by love rather than fear of Him, who hath showed to us such grace, than which, as He Himself attests, greater cannot be found."<sup>1</sup> Such language would seem to lead to the conclusion that no legal element mingled in the transaction; that redemption is effected solely by moral means, by the love of God operating so on man's soul through the work of Christ as to destroy sin in him, and with sin to obliterate its guilt. "Anselm," says Banr, "considered the last cause of redemption to be the divine justice which requires an infinite equivalent for the infinite guilt of sin;" Abaelard "held it to be the free grace of God, which by kindling love in the breast of man blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."<sup>2</sup> There are other passages, however, in Abaelard's writings which induce the conclusion that this would be to give only a partial view of his doctrine. Thus, in his *Summa Theologiae* (ch. xxiii.), he says, "Man, when he sinned, separated himself by his sin from his Lord. Therefore the Son of God came, that as a fitting Mediator He might free man from sin and infuse

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Ep. ad Rom.*, Bk. iii., *Opp.* p. 550, quoted by Münscher, ii. p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Hagenbach.



into him His own love. But this He did by offering to the Father the man (*i.e.* the human nature) which He had assumed, that is, by *giving man as a price for man* (*pretium pro homine hominem dando*). Tropically this is called a price. This, therefore, is the certain and proper cause of redemption, as both the apostle to the Romans and Christ in the Gospels have taught." From this extract it is plain that in some sense Abælard held the doctrine of Christ's death being a satisfaction to God, and that the satisfaction rested on the vicariousness of His suffering for us—man is redeemed by Christ's humanity being given for man. Whilst he recoiled from the position that Christ's death was literally a price paid for man's redemption, he yet evidently felt that something more than the mere moral effect of the love displayed by Him was necessary in order to reduce the separation which sin had made between us and God. When he pronounces the giving of a price for man by Christ as the certain and proper cause of redemption, it would require an ingenuity surpassing even his to avoid his being shut up to the admission of a view of the nature of the atonement not essentially differing from that of Anselm.

The view of Anselm came to be that commonly followed in the Church—the orthodox view to which the scholastic divines generally adhered. Whilst, however, it was commonly held that Christ's work made satisfaction to God for sin, diversities of opinion arose as to the relation of the satisfaction to the guilt. The Thomists, the followers of Thomas Aquinas, held by what they had called a *satisfactio abundans*; and Aquinas himself is the first to broach the opinion that the sufferings of Christ were in all respects exactly the same as men deserved to suffer for their sins, only that these sufferings being those of a divine being, of the God-man, had a superabundant value, in virtue of which all blessings were secured to His people as theirs of right. Scotus, on the other hand, maintained that the value of Christ's death was not intrinsic, and was limited; that it was *made* of value simply by God's accepting it as an atonement for sin; and that this, its fictitious value, was measured by the actual acceptance of it by God on behalf of sinners. The controversy between the Thomists and the Scotists raged with no small fury for many

years, and still, it may be said, subsists within the bosom of the Romish Church between the Dominicans, with whom side the Jesuits, and the Franciscans. Luther and his adherents embraced the doctrine of the Thomists, and this became in consequence the prevailing view in the Lutheran Church. It is technically called "The Theory of Acceptatio," because it presumes the actual acceptance of a sufficient satisfaction for sin by God from Christ. The other view is called "The Theory of Acceptilatio,"—a term borrowed from the Roman law, and used to denote a legal fiction by which a creditor who had not really received payment in full of his claims nevertheless, when formally asked if his claims had been satisfied, admitted that they were. So the Scotists regarded the satisfaction of Christ: it was not the actual paying of our debts, nor had it any intrinsic fitness to satisfy for sin, but in so far as God is pleased of His free grace to pardon sin on account of it, it is held by Him as if it were a satisfaction for sin.

By Calvin and the Reformed Churches the doctrine of Anselm and Aquinas was received as by the Lutherans; the only difference between them being that, whilst some of the Lutherans held that the satisfaction of Christ was accomplished by His *obedientia passiva usque ad mortem*, the Calvinists contended that it was accomplished by His *obedientia activa* as well as by His *obedientia passiva*. This is a difference of some importance in itself, but it does not affect the point now before us, on which both parties were substantially agreed. "Peccata remitti propter Christum, qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit," is the language of the Augsburg Confession; "Christus peccata mundi in se recepit et sustulit divinæque justitiæ satisfecit," is that of the Helvetic Confession. Between these two utterances there is no appreciable difference.

By the Socinians this doctrine was wholly rejected. As they repudiated the divinity of our Lord, there was for them no such problem as Anselm felt himself called to discuss in his *Cur Deus Homo?* All that they had to do was to account for the language of Scripture in reference to the efficacy of Christ's death, and the relation of that to our deliverance from sin. And this they do in the following

manner, as set forth in the *Racovian Catechism*: "In what sense is Christ said to have died for our sins or on account of our sins? In the same sense, though much fuller and more perfect, in which the victims were said to be slain for sins. To Christ, Himself innocent of all sin, our sins were the cause of death, which He endured that He might free us from the guilt of them all; and this is the effect of that death, that He might take away and abolish them in us. . . . By His stripes we are healed, for by so great love He converts us wanderers to Himself" (p. 277). "What do you think concerning reconciliation? That to us, who were the enemies of God, and alienated from Him on account of our sins, Christ Jesus has showed the way how it behoves us to be converted to God and to be reconciled to Him; and for the doing of this He has given us a strong impulse by His death, in which the love of God towards us has appeared so great" (p. 284). The ground thus assumed is obviously that of Abelard and the advocates of the purely moral effect of Christ's death. His death bears on our reconciliation with God, and furthers this simply by supplying to us a motive to obedience and love which may constrain us to be at peace with Him.

(3.) The teachings of the Socinians, instead of furthering the development of the dogma, were plainly regressive; but they had the effect of calling forth a writer to whom theological science owes not a little in this department. I allude to Hugo Grotius, who, in opposition to Socinus and his school, issued a little work, entitled, *Defensio Fidei Catholice de Satisfactione Christi*, in which, though professedly maintaining the doctrine of Anselm, he has so modified it as to introduce a theory of the atonement essentially different. In the theory which the Church had adopted from Anselm, the necessity of satisfaction for sin was rested on God's essential justice, or on the idea of absolute justice, to which adequate compensation must be made before sin could be remitted. To this theory Socinus objected that it rendered forgiveness impossible; for if Christ paid man's debts to God as his creditor, or if He did for man exactly what man ought to have done for himself, then was man free, and nothing remained to be forgiven. To escape from this Grotius resorted to a distinction known to lawyers between *solutio* and *satisfactio*. If the very thing

owing be paid, either by the debtor himself or by another for him, his debt is then discharged and annulled; there is no remission of it. But if not the very thing due, but something which the creditor is willing to hold equivalent to it, is rendered, then there is room for remission, for the debt remains until the creditor shall signify his pleasure to accept the equivalent.<sup>1</sup> Now this, says Grotius, is what takes place in the remission of sins. Christ has not paid the very debt which man owed, but He has done what is equivalent to this, and God graciously accepts this on man's behalf, and on the ground of it remits his transgression, pardons his sin. But in what does this differ from the "Acceptilatio" theory? In nothing thus far; but Grotius proceeds to inquire what it is that Christ has done so as to furnish what God may accept as sufficient for the forgiveness of sins. And here he contends for an intrinsic fitness in what Christ did to meet the exigencies of the case, so that it became an equivalent for man's pardon, not by the mere grace of God in accepting it, but because it was in itself adapted to that end. But how? it may be asked. In answer to this Grotius brings forward the view of God as a Governor and a Judge, and shows that in law penalty may be safely remitted to the transgressor if there be a sufficient penal example given, such as shall deter others from the commission of similar offences—such as shall uphold the authority of law and government. He thus bases man's forgiveness on the penal example of Christ, suffering for us as a victim to the rectoral demands of God. According to him, God could not remit sins without a penal example of the evil and enormity of sin; this was furnished by our Lord's obedience unto death; and thus His death becomes the necessary condition of forgiveness—that on the ground of which alone this could be bestowed.

It is easy to see that the theory thus presented is no longer the simple Satisfaction theory of the schoolmen. In this God appears simply as man's creditor, whose own sense of justice in the abstract forbids him to remit what is due; according to the theory of Grotius, God appears in His governmental

<sup>1</sup> "Solvit qui creditori pecuniam omnem numerat; satisfacit qui quocunque modo creditorem placat, cautione, satisfactione, pigore, partis debitæ solutione," etc. Ulpian.

character as one who is bound to inflict the decreed penalty on offences committed against the law He has to administer. In the one case, the satisfaction has to be rendered to God Himself to appease His wrath ; in the other, it has to be rendered to the rectoral authority of God so as to reconcile forgiveness of sin with the integrity of law and the stability of law. Satisfaction, in the old Church theory, was the simple payment of the debt of man by Christ ; satisfaction, in the Grotian theory, means the suffering of Christ for man as a penal example. The aspect of the one is chiefly towards something which is past ; the aspect of the other is chiefly towards something that is possible in the future : the one is therapeutic, the other prophylactic.

(4.) The opinions above described have continued to be those between which the judgments of divines have been divided in later times. Every theory of the atonement that has been advocated since the time of Grotius proceeds on one or other of the following assumptions :—*a.* That the death of Christ was a satisfaction to God's justice for man's sin ; *b.* that it was a ground or reason in the divine government on which sin could be forgiven ; *c.* that it was a fact which exerts so powerful a moral influence on the sinner who duly receives it that it draws him away from his sin, and so destroys sin and restores him to God. Every theory of the atonement which has been advocated is a modification of one or other of these fundamental principles, or an attempt to combine them.

The two great antagonist theories of the atonement are the Satisfactionist theory and the Moral theory. Each of these it will be our endeavour carefully to state and to examine, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they, or any modification of them or combination of them, can be accepted as furnishing a just view of this all-important subject. Meanwhile I may mention, whilst I am dealing with the subject historically, one or two peculiarities of opinion which are worthy of notice, though not of sufficient importance to require special examination.

Among the Lutheran divines there were not a few who held the doctrine of a double merit of Christ, one arising from His active obedience, the other from His passive endurance. In virtue of the former it was maintained that He satisfied the

law for sinners; in virtue of the latter He satisfied the divine justice for sinners; so that believers obtain through His work both acquittal and a right to spiritual blessings. "Agendo eulpam expiavit, patiendò peccatam nostram sustulit" (Quenstedt). "By His active obedience Christ most perfectly fulfilled in our stead the law of God, so that penitent sinners, applying to themselves by a true faith this vicarious fulfilment of the law, are deemed just before God. By His passive obedience Christ transferred to Himself the sins of the whole world, and spontaneously suffered the penalties due to them, . . . so that to those who believe in Christ the Redeemer sins are not imputed for eternal punishment" (Hollaz). But this distinction is now generally repudiated by divines as unauthorized by Scripture, as in itself futile, and as capable of being abused to erroneous conclusions.

By some Arminian divines the Scotist doctrine of *Acceptatio* is held under this form, that the work of Christ, ending in His death, was a pledge of the divine grace necessary for our repose; in other words, that the whole work of Christ was a divine accommodation to the permanent requirements of the human heart; assuring men of God's willingness to pardon sin, and of His love to sinners, and at the same time authorizing men, inasmuch as the sufferings of Christ were endured for the purpose of liberating sinners, to regard the misery and pains of His death as destined for them, as wholesome for them, and consequently that they, looking to the suffering and death of Christ, should not fear misery for themselves after this life.<sup>1</sup>

The views advanced by the Rationalists are substantially identical with those of the Socinians, namely, that the work of Christ was merely exemplary, and is efficacious for our salvation simply as it exerts a moral and persuasive influence upon us. Some philosophical divines, following the leading of Kant, regard the death of Christ as having a symbolical significance. He saw in it the ethical process of the conflict of the good principle with the evil, and the victory of the former over the latter,—a process in which the new man has to bear the sufferings of the old. "The passing out," says he, "of the corrupt nature into the good is in itself a sacrifice,

<sup>1</sup> See Morus, *Epitome Theol. Christ.*, p. 153, 3rd ed.

and an entrance upon a long course of evils of life which comes upon the new man in the mind of the Son of God, to wit, simply for the sake of the good, but which properly are due as punishment to another, namely, the old man (for this, morally, is another)."<sup>1</sup> This is not very intelligible; but the meaning seems to be that in the victory of the good over the evil in a man there is an offering up of the old corrupt nature, a sacrifice of the old self; and that the sacrifice of Christ was a symbol of this. In this case His sacrifice really effected nothing; it was merely an illustration of what we must effect in ourselves, and is helpful to this simply as it gives some stimulus to our activity by way of example. An opinion like this is plainly rather an ingenious evasion of the question, What was the atonement of Christ? than any attempt to solve it. On this account it deserves notice simply as one of the vagaries into which men, even of the highest intellect, may be betrayed when they speculate on theological questions without submitting to the teaching of Scripture.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### 2. *Principal Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

In the sketch I have given of the history of opinion on the subject of the atonement, I have endeavoured to indicate the different views which have been advanced on this head, and their position relatively to each other. The two great antagonist theories are, on the one hand, that which regards the work of Christ as being designed to effect reconciliation between God and man by the offering of a legal satisfaction for man's transgression; and, on the other, that which resolves the effect of Christ's work into its moral power in moving man to seek reconciliation with God. Of these, various modifications have been advanced by different writers and accepted by theological schools of greater or less importance.

<sup>1</sup> *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen, u.s.w.*, 2 Stuck.

To examine all these in detail would require more time than we have at our disposal, and therefore I shall content myself with stating the leading opinions on both sides, and offering such remarks as may serve to indicate the worth of each. After noticing some of the more recent speculations which have been advanced on the subject in this country and America, I shall endeavour to lay down those principles which seem to me to be essential to our reaching a just view on this subject, and which seem to conduct to the view I am prepared to advocate.

Beginning with those who look upon the atonement of Christ in the light of a legal satisfaction or judicial expiation, I remark that all agree in thinking that the work of Christ derives its worth from the union of the divine and the human natures in His person, and all admit that worth to be not only supreme, but infinite. There is a difference, however, between certain schools or classes of them as to the nature of the compensation rendered to the divine government and law on our behalf by Christ, His special purpose and intention in offering it, and the consequent extent to which His work was designed to be sufficient. Of these varying shades of opinion we notice the following:—

(1.) *That of the Hyper-Calvinists*,—a name which has been given, not because those to whom it is attached are regarded as having gone beyond Calvin in their doctrine, but because they carry the views of Calvin on this head to their utmost extent, and hold them with unbending rigidity.

a. According to them, the work of Christ was of the nature of a price paid for the release of man from penalties which he had incurred,—a price which bore a fixed and exact relation to the amount of debt which man had incurred by his sins. According to this view, what He rendered was strictly a *quid pro quo*; there was as much on the one side as on the other; the suffering obedience of the Saviour being an exact equivalent for the sins of the saved, and that not by a *solutio tantadem*, but by a *solutio ejusdem*, i.e. not by paying something of equal value of the same kind, but by paying the very thing that was due.

This opinion cannot be ascribed to Calvin, who expresses himself in a very general manner as to the satisfaction made



for man by Christ. "When we say," he remarks, "that favour was procured for us by the merit of Christ we mean this, that by His blood we have been cleansed, and that His death was an expiation for our sins." "This I take for granted, that if Christ satisfied for our sins, if He suffered the punishment due to us, if by His obedience He propitiated God, if, in fine, He, the just, suffered for the unjust, then salvation was procured by His righteousness for us, which is equivalent to our having merited it."<sup>1</sup> These statements are so general that they might be advanced by any one holding the Satisfaction theory.

Among Calvin's followers, however, both on the Continent and in this country, there were found some by whom the doctrine as above stated was asserted in all its rigidity. Not only was it maintained that Christ became "sponsor for those alone who by eternal election had been given to Him, . . . and them alone did He reconcile unto God,"<sup>2</sup>—that He did not make satisfaction or in any way die save for all and only those whom the Father had given Him, and who are actually saved;<sup>3</sup> but the opinion was broadly avowed that there was a transference of the sin of the elect to Christ, and that He actually suffered the same as they should have suffered, and thereby paid for their redemption exactly what the law demanded as the due penalty of their offences. Thus, Owen says of the satisfaction made by Christ: "It was a full, valuable compensation made to the justice of God for all the sins of all those for whom He made satisfaction by undergoing that same punishment which, by reason of the obligation that was upon them, they themselves were bound to undergo. When I say *the same*," he goes on to explain, "I mean essentially the same in weight and pressure, though not in all accidents of duration and the like; for it was impossible that He should be detained by death."<sup>4</sup> Farther on, in the same treatise,<sup>5</sup> he says, in reference to the laying of sins upon Christ, God "charged on Him and imputed to Him all the sins of all the elect, and proceeded against Him accordingly. He stood as our Surety, really charged with the whole debt,

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, ii. 17. 4, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Form. Cons. Helvet.*, art. 13

<sup>3</sup> Witsius, *Econ. Fæd.*, ii. c. 9, § 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

and was to pay the utmost farthing, as a surety is to do if it be required of him; though he borrow not the money, nor have one penny of that which is in the obligation, yet if he be sued to an execution, he must pay all. The Lord Christ (if I may so say) was sued by His Father's justice unto an execution, in answer whereunto He underwent all that was due to sin." In another treatise the same great theologian gives the following as the expression of his view concerning the satisfaction rendered by Christ: "Christ paid the same thing that was in the obligation; as if in things real a friend should pay twenty pounds for him that owed so much and not anything in another kind." . . . "I affirm that He paid *idem*, that is, the same thing that was in the obligation, and not *tantundem*, something equivalent thereunto in another kind."<sup>1</sup> And farther on he says, "The assertion I seek to maintain is this: That the punishment which our Saviour underwent was the same that the law required of us, God relaxing His law as to the person suffering, but not as to the penalty suffered."<sup>2</sup>

These statements of Owen may be regarded as presenting clearly and in few words what were the views entertained by the English Puritans and early Nonconformists regarding the nature and extent of the atonement made for sin by Christ. They believed that to be in itself of infinite value; but they regarded it as limited both in design and in effect to the elect, and as being of the nature of a paying to the law of a *quid pro quo*, an enduring by Christ of the very penalty which they as sinners had deserved in order to secure their deliverance. By some the commercial character ascribed to the atonement was carried out still farther, and the idea of an actual and exact commutation of man's sins on the one hand, and Christ's righteousness on the other, was entertained and advocated. The principal representative of this school was Dr. Crisp, minister of Brinkworth in Wiltshire, about the middle of the 17th century; and it numbers the names of Chauncy, Saltmarsh, and Gill among its adherents. The republication of Dr. Crisp's works by his son at the close of the century led to his peculiar views on the subject of the atonement being commented upon by Dr. Daniel Williams,

<sup>1</sup> *Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. c. ii. p. 438.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

an English Presbyterian minister, in a work entitled, *Gospel-Truth Stated and Vindicated* (Lond. 1692), which passed through several editions, and gave rise to a somewhat violent controversy. Of the views advanced by Dr. Crisp a correct idea will be obtained from his own words, which I quote from the work of Dr. Williams. Writing of the laying of our sins on Christ, he says: "It is the iniquity itself that the Lord hath laid upon Christ; not only our punishment, but our very sin. . . . This transaction of our sins to Christ is a real act; our sins so became Christ's that He stood the sinner in our stead. . . . To speak more plainly: Hast thou been an idolater, hast thou been a blasphemer, hast thou been a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, a drunkard? If thou hast part in the Lord, all these transgressions of thine become actually the transgressions of Christ." In another place he thus insists on the transfer of our sin to Christ and His righteousness to us: "Mark it well: Christ Himself is not so completely righteous, but we are as righteous as He; nor we so completely sinful, but Christ became, being made sin, as completely sinful as we. Nay more, we are the same righteousness, for we are made the righteousness of God; that very sinfulness that we were, Christ is made that very sinfulness before God. So that here is a direct change—Christ takes our person and condition and stands in our stead, we take Christ's person and condition and stand in His stead." These passages may serve to convey a clear view of the doctrines held by this school—a school which, though numbering among its adherents some of the best and holiest of men, has been the main support and promoter of antinomianism in this country. By the great body of the English Nonconformists these views have been and continue to be repudiated. Bates, Howe, Alsop, along with many other very decided Calvinists, joined at the time in denouncing them as unscriptural and dangerous; and in later times the vigorous pen of Andrew Fuller—not to mention less famous names—was employed in exposing them and advocating Calvinistic views apart from them. Even Dr. Owen raised his voice against them, for in one of his greatest treatises, that on the *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, he expressly says: "Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing is more sacredly or assuredly believed by us, than that nothing

which Christ did or suffered, nothing that He undertook or underwent, did, or could, constitute Him subjectively, inherently, and thereon personally, a sinner or guilty of any sin of His own. To bear the guilt or blame of other men's faults—to be *alienæ culpæ reus*—makes no man a sinner, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it" (p. 201); and again: "Our sin was imputed to Christ only as He was our Surety for a time—to this end, that He might take it away, destroy it, and abolish it. It never was imputed unto Him so as to make any alteration absolutely in His personal state and condition" (p. 203). And, on the other hand, he strenuously maintains that "notwithstanding this full, plenary satisfaction once made for the sins of the world that shall be saved, yet all men continue equally to be born by nature 'children of wrath,' and whilst they believe not the wrath of God abideth on them, that is, they are obnoxious unto and under the curse of the law" (p. 216); and again: "The righteousness of Christ is not transfused into us so as to be made inherently and subjectively ours, as it was in Him" (p. 218). From these passages it is evident that Owen was far from holding the extreme views of Dr. Crisp and his school.

The views of Owen were accepted and advocated by the great American theologian Jonathan Edwards, who, in his *Essay concerning the Necessity and Reasonableness of the Christian Doctrine of Satisfaction for Sin*, uses such language as the following: "Christ suffered the full punishment of the sin that was imputed to Him, or offered that to God that was fully and completely equivalent to what we owed to God's justice for our sins" (p. 384). "The satisfaction of Christ by suffering the punishment of sin is properly to be distinguished as being in its own nature different from the merit of Christ. For merit is only some excellency or worth. But when we consider Christ's sufferings merely as the satisfaction for the guilt of another, the excellency of Christ's act in suffering does not at all come into consideration; but only these two things, viz. their equality or equivalence to the punishment that the sinner deserved; and secondly, the union between Him and them, or the propriety of His being accepted in suffering as the representative of the sinner" (p. 389).

b. The arguments by which this view of the work of Christ is sought to be sustained are chiefly the following, which I take from Owen, whose masculine style of thought and exhaustive method of dealing with a subject are such as usually to leave little for any one else to add to what he advances on the side he espouses.

(a) Scripture expressly makes known to us the fact of a transference of punishment in respect of the subjects suffering it, but not one word is uttered respecting any change of the kind of punishment, but rather is the contrary affirmed; see Rom. viii. 32, "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."

(b) All the punishment due to us was contained in the curse and sanction of the law, that is, the penalty under which sin has brought man. But this was endured by Christ (Gal. iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"), so that He suffered the very penalty we had incurred.

(c) When God condemneth sin, then He condemns it in that very punishment which is due unto it in the sinner, or rather to the sinner for it. He hath revealed but one rule of His proceeding in this case. Now He condemned sin in the flesh of Christ, or of Him sent in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3, "God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"). The condemning of sin is the infliction of the punishment due to sin.

(d) The whole penalty of sin is death (Gen. ii. 17). This Christ underwent for us (Heb. ii. 9). And to die for another is to undergo that death which that other should have undergone (2 Sam. xviii. 33). But as eternal death may be considered two ways, either as such *in potentia*, and in its own nature, or as actually; so our Saviour underwent it, not in the latter, but in the former sense (Heb. ii. 9, 14). The dignity of His Person (1 Pet. iii. 18; Heb. ix. 26, 28), which raises the estimation of punishment, makes what He suffered æquipotent to actual eternal suffering. There is a sameness in Christ's sufferings with that in the obligation in respect of essence, and equivalency in respect of attendancies, such as duration and the like.

(e) In the meeting of our iniquities upon Christ (Isa. liii. 6),

and His being thereby made sin for us (2 Cor. v. 21), lay the very punishment of our sin, as to us threatened, upon Him.

(f) The Scriptures describe His sufferings in such a way as to indicate that He suffered what was threatened to sin. Thus, His sufferings are called "stripes" or "wounds," which were so laid on Him in our stead, that we are healed thereby (Isa. liii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 24); they are described as a being sorrowful exceedingly even unto death, as a being troubled, a being in agony, etc. All these indicate that the bitterness of the death due to sin was fully on His soul. It was no less than the weight of the wrath of God and the whole punishment due to sin that He wrestled under.<sup>1</sup>

(g) The death of Christ is in different places of Scripture restricted to His people, His elect, His Church, and His sheep; and therefore the good purchased thereby ought not to be extended to those who are not of this class, to those who are reprobates, to those who are without.

(h) For whom Christ died, He died as their sponsor, in their room and stead, that He might free them from guilt and desert of death (Isa. liii. 5, 6; Rom. v. 6-8; Gal. iii. 13; 2 Cor. v. 21). Evidently He changeth turns with us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. . . . Christ dying for men made satisfaction for their sins, that they should not die. Now, for what sins He made satisfaction, for them the justice of God is satisfied; which surely is not done for the sins of the reprobates, because He justly punisheth them to eternity upon themselves (Matt. v. 26).

(i) For whom Christ died, for them He also rose again to make intercession for them; for whose offences He was delivered, for their justification He was raised. He is an High Priest to make intercession for them for whom, by His death, He obtained eternal redemption. These two acts of His priesthood are not to be separated; it belongs to the same Mediator for sin to sacrifice and to intercede; our assurance that He is our Advocate is grounded on His being the propitiation for our sins; He is an Advocate for every one for whose sins His blood was a propitiation. But Christ does not intercede for all; He is not a Mediator for them that perish, nor an Advocate for them whose suit fails; and

<sup>1</sup> *Of the Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. c. iv. p. 448.

therefore the benefit of His death must also be restrained to them who are finally partakers of both.

(j) For whom Christ died, He merited grace and glory, faith, and salvation, and reconciliation with God. But this He has not done for all and every one. Many never do believe; the wrath of God remains on some, abiding on them that believe not. Now, to be reconciled to one and yet lie under His heavy wrath seem to be *ἀσύστατα*, things that will scarce consist together.

(k) Christ died for them whom God gave to Him to be saved (John xvii. 6). He laid down His life for the sheep (x. 11). But all are not the sheep of Christ, all are not given to Him by God to bring to glory: for of those that are so given there is not one that perisheth, for He giveth eternal life to as many as God hath given Him.

(l) Those for whom Christ laid down His life are those whom the Father loved, and whom it was His good pleasure to endow with spiritual blessings. But this love and this good pleasure of His evidently comprehend some when others are excluded; so that there must be some for whom Christ did not die.<sup>1</sup>

In another of his works Owen thus argues the limitation of Christ's atoning work: "I may add this dilemma to our Universalists" [he means those who hold that Christ died for all]: "God imposed His wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men, or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men, then have all men some sins to answer for, and so no man shall be saved. . . . If the second, that is what we affirm, viz. that Christ in their stead and room suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the world. If the first [viz. that Christ died for all the sins of all men], then why are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say, Because of their unbelief; they will not believe. But this unbelief, is it a sin or is it not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it or not. If He did, why must that hinder, more than their other sins for which He died, from partaking of the fruit of His death? If He did not, then He

<sup>1</sup> *Display of Arminianism*, Works, vol. x. c. ix. p. 91.

did not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will." So conclusive did Owen find this reasoning, that he does not hesitate to say that "to affirm Christ to die for all men is the readiest way to prove that He died for no man in the sense Christians have hitherto understood."

c. The doctrine thus advocated has been often spoken against in severe terms by its opponents. Even Dr. Wardlaw forgets for the moment his usual suavity, and stigmatizes it as "this pitiful process of commercial reckoning, this weight and measure system of atonement." This, as it appears to me, is hardly just. The conception of a purchase as involved in the work of Christ on our behalf is one borrowed from Scripture, and therefore one which, in taking a comprehensive view of the subject, we must neither leave out of view nor explain away. It may be that Owen and his school err in making this the *exclusive* aspect under which they have contemplated the atonement; but that this is *one* of the aspects under which it must be contemplated, cannot, I think, be doubted. Instead, then, of strongly denouncing this theory of the atonement, the proper course would seem to be to accept it so far as it rests on a scriptural basis, and then to show where it is defective and objectionable. If Owen is right in restricting the atonement to the idea of a purchase, his reasoning appears to me quite unanswerable. It is here, however, that he and his party err. Whilst it is true that the salvation of believers is a redemption, a purchasing of them from sin and misery that they may be restored to God, it is not in accordance with the representations of Scripture or the facts of the case to make this the only or even the essential idea of the atonement. The objections to this are many, and apparently conclusive. You will find them stated by Dr. Wardlaw in his *Theology*, vol. ii. Lect. xxiv., and by Dr. Payne in his Lectures on *Divine Sovereignty, Atonement*, etc., Lect. ix. The weightiest are—(a) that this view is really incompatible with a belief in the infinite value of the Saviour's propitiatory work, seeing it necessarily limits that to an equivalency with the guilt of the elect. (b) That on this view it is impossible to take, in their fair and proper sense, those passages of Scripture which state that Christ was a propitiation for the sins of the world, and that He was



sent "that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish."

(c) That on this view the salvation of the non-elect becomes a natural impossibility, just as much so as it is for those to see for whom no eyes have been provided, or those to understand from whom God has withheld the gifts of intellect.

(d) On this supposition the general invitations and promises of the gospel are without an adequate basis, and seem like a mere mockery, an offer, in short, of what has not been provided.

It will not do to say, in reply to this, that as these invitations are actually given we are entitled on the authority of God's word to urge them and justified in accepting them; for this is mere evasion. The question is not as to whether they are to be regarded as sincere and valid, but on *what ground* can they be so regarded? Had God merely placed in Scripture these invitations and promises without making known to us anything regarding the work of Christ on which they are based, our wisdom would have been to accept the invitation and rely on the promise without further inquiry. But seeing it is not so; seeing God has rested His invitation and His promise on the work of Christ as made known to us in His word, we are not only entitled, but bound to inquire into the relation in which the two stand to each other, that we may see how the superstructure really rests on the basis. If a skilled architect tells me that a certain building is secure I may take his word for it and inquire no further; but if he insists on showing me the foundation, and how, resting on such a foundation, the building is secure, I am bound to examine and satisfy myself that it is really so. When, therefore, God is pleased not only to give us gracious invitations and promises, but to show us the foundation on which these rest, we are bound to examine this and see whether it is broad enough to sustain the superstructure that is erected upon it. And if on inquiry we find that the basis, according to our view of it, is not broad enough for what is erected on it, the fair conclusion seems to be that we have made a mistake in our survey, and that the basis is not such as we assumed it to be, but must be broader. Accordingly, when we find that the doctrine of a limited atonement, an atonement on the principle of a *quid pro quo*, does not afford a basis broad

enough to sustain the unlimited offers of the gospel, it is surely a perfectly fair conclusion that that doctrine is erroneous, and cannot be the doctrine of Scripture. Finally, on this view the actual salvation of the elect ceases to be of grace, and becomes as much a matter of right on their part and of simple equity on the part of God as the release of a debtor whose debt has been paid by another is a matter of right and equity. If I am unable to satisfy the law, and the sovereign remits the penalty on some grounds of general jurisprudence or governmental righteousness which left Him free to give or withhold the blessing according to his sovereign good pleasure, then the reception of the benefit by me is purely of grace, and I am made thereby a debtor to grace. But if the debt which I owed has been paid, if every special claim which the law had on me has been met and satisfied, then my release is a simple matter of justice, the ruler is bound in equity to set me free, and no room is left for grace to enter.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (2.) *Arminian or Remonstrant Theory.*

Having described and briefly considered the High Calvinistic view of the atonement, I proceed now to that held by the Arminians, or, as they should rather be called, the Remonstrants. Whilst they agree with the Calvinists in maintaining the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin, and in regarding the death of Christ as the offering of the sacrifice that was required, they differ from the Calvinists in their view both of the *nature* and the *extent* of the atonement thereby offered.

a. The following summary of the views of Arminius and his followers, especially the Dutch Remonstrants, may be given :—

(a) Christ, by the counsel of God, died for all and each in such a way that not only His death is *sufficient* in itself in virtue of intrinsic worth, but it was *efficiently* offered for all

and each, inasmuch as God willed that that which in itself is sufficient for all should be actually made either in the room or for the behoof of all and each, that is, of the whole human race, so that by means of it, it might come to pass that God might will for the future to act graciously towards the human race. Thus the death of Christ is the foundation of the blessing promised under the New Covenant.

(b) Christ, by His own and the Father's intention, obtained for all and each of mankind, as well those that perish as those that are saved, restitution into a state of grace and salvation, so that no one shall be, on account of original sin, obnoxious to condemnation or be condemned, but all shall be free from the guilt of that sin.

(c) Christ, by the Father's counsel, endured death for all without any certain or definite purpose of saving any one, so that, in regard to the impetration of the death of Christ, its necessity and utility might abide sound and safe and absolutely complete though the impetrated [obtained] redemption should not be actually applied to a single individual.<sup>1</sup>

(d) Christ, by His satisfaction, obtained certainly for no one salvation, or faith by which this satisfaction may be applied effectually for salvation, but only acquired for the Father plenary will and power to act with men *de novo*, to enter into a covenant, either of grace or works, and to prescribe what conditions He pleased, of which conditions the fulfilment depends on the free will of man, and so it may happen that either none or all may fulfil them.

(e) The impetration extends beyond the application, so that salvation was obtained (impetrated) for all which yet is applied to few.<sup>2</sup>

That it may be seen that this summary adequately and correctly represents the scheme of the Remonstrants, it may be proper to cite a few passages from their writings. The first I cite is from a document of the highest authority in this point

<sup>1</sup> The terms "impetratio" and "impetrare" are favourite terms with writers of this school, and from their frequent use of them their theory of the atonement is often described as the Impetration scheme or theory. The Latin word *impetrare* means to obtain by entreaty, or by any other means that are reasonable and legitimate; and *impetratio* means the obtaining of that which is sought by such means.

<sup>2</sup> See Turretine, *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xiv. qu. 14, § 5.

of view, the document submitted by them to the Synod of Dort. In this they thus speak: "The Redemption-price which Christ offered to His Father is not only in and by itself sufficient for the redeeming of the whole human race, but it was also by the decree, will, and grace of God the Father paid for all men and for each man; wherefore no one is by an antecedent decree of God definitely excluded from participation in the fruit of Christ's death. Christ, by the merit of His death, hath so far reconciled God the Father to the whole human race, that the Father can and will, on account of His merit, saving His justice and veracity, enter into and confirm a new covenant of grace with men, sinners and obnoxious to condemnation."<sup>1</sup>

The next passage I extract is from the *Theologia Christiana* of Philip Limborch, one of the clearest and ablest writers of the Remonstrant school. "Our opinion is this: That the Lord Jesus Christ was a true and proper sacrifice for our sins; enduring the severest agonies and the accursed death of the cross, and, after He was raised from the dead, entering with His own blood the heavenly sanctuary, and there presenting Himself before the Father; by which His sacrifice He propitiated the Father justly offended by our sins, and reconciled us to Him. He thus bore for us and in our place a most heavy affliction, and so turned away from us the punishment which we had merited." And then, in reply to the question, What was it that Christ suffered in our stead? Was it the punishment we had merited by our sins? he replies in the negative, and maintains that what Christ endured was grievous misery and a bloody death, which was instead of the punishment that should justly have been borne by us: "not," he adds, "because properly we had merited precisely the same in kind, for we had merited a much heavier penalty, even eternal curse; but because He, the innocent One, spontaneously

<sup>1</sup> "Pretium redemptionis, quod Christus Patri suo obtulit, non tantum in se et per se toti humano generi redimendo sufficiens est, sed etiam pro omnibus et singulis hominibus ex decreto, voluntate, et gratia Dei Patris per solutum est; eoque a participatione fructuum mortis Christi nemo antecedente Dei decreto precise exclusus est. Christus merito mortis sue Deum Patrem universo generi humano hactenus reconcilavit, ut Pater propter ipsius meritum, salva justitia et veritate sua, novum gratiæ Fœdus cum peccatoribus et damnationi obnoxiiis hominibus inire et sancire potuerit et voluerit."

took this on Himself, and was a sacrifice to God the Father, so well-pleasing that He is thereby moved to receive us into favour." He goes on to say that the efficacy of Christ's work depends not on His having suffered the same kind or amount of penalty that we had incurred, but because, according to the divine will (*pro arbitrio divino*), suffering was laid on Him, who was to be the victim, and that efficacy, as exacted from Him, removes from us the penalty of sin, is pleasing to God, expiates our sins, and obtains for us the remission of them, the same as if it had been of the same kind as that which we had merited. "In this sense," he continues, "Jesus Christ may be rightly said to have been punished in our place, inasmuch as He bore the greatest mental pangs and the accursed death of the cross for us, which is of the nature of a vicarious punishment for our sins. And in this sense He satisfied the Father for us, and may be said to have merited righteousness for us, inasmuch as He made satisfaction, not indeed to the rigour of divine justice, but to the will of God, who is just as well as merciful, and performed all things which are necessary to our reconciliation with God." Farther on, in answer to the question, "Did Christ not only make satisfaction for us, but also merit faith and regeneration for us?" Limborch replies: "He merited, that is, He obtained and effected, that God should suspend His wrath, concede to us a season of grace, call us to faith and regeneration, and extend to us all the helps of grace by which we may be enabled to yield to the divine call; but faith and regeneration themselves He did not merit for us. Had He done so, God could not have demanded faith of us under threatening of death; in that case He would have been bound by the power of Christ's merit to effect that in us by omnipotent energy; and so faith would not have been a duty binding on us, but the work of God alone."<sup>1</sup> In another place Limborch says, in reference to the extent of Christ's propitiation, "Christ, by the decree and intention of the Father, has died for all men and every individual, so as to obtain for them grace and the remission of sins, no one being specially exempted."<sup>2</sup>

Another eminent divine of the same school is Conrædus or Curcellæus, who subsequently became an Arian. He thus

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Christ.* Bk. III. ch. xx.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. IV. ch. iii.

states the substance of the Remonstrant doctrine concerning the work of Christ: "Christ did not, as is commonly thought, satisfy by suffering all the pains which we had merited by our sins; for, 1st, This does not appertain to the nature of a sacrifice, since sacrifices are not payments of debts; 2ndly, Christ did not suffer eternal death, which is the due penalty of sin, for He hung only a few hours on the cross, and on the third day rose from the dead. Nay, even though He had endured eternal death, it does not appear that He could have made satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, for this would have been only one death, which could not have been equivalent to all the deaths which men had merited by their sins."<sup>1</sup>

Equally explicit are the statements of Arminius himself on this head: "The immediate effect," says he, "of the death and passion of Christ is not the actual taking away of sins from any one, not the actual remission, not the justification, not the actual redemption of this one or the other. It is the impetration from God of remission, justification, and redemption, by which it is brought about that God now can remit to men sinners their sins, since His righteousness being satisfied no longer opposes."<sup>2</sup>

From Corvinus, another eminent Remonstrant divine, the following sentences also may be cited as presenting in a condensed form the views of that school:—"A potential and conditionate reconciliation, not an actual and absolute, has been obtained by the death of Christ." "I believe it might have come to pass that the death of Christ might have had its end though not any man had believed." "Though the death and satisfaction of Christ have been accomplished, yet it might come to pass that none should be saved in consequence of none fulfilling the conditions of the new covenant."

These extracts may suffice to show from the writings of the most eminent of the Arminian or Remonstrant divines what was their view of the nature and extent of Christ's atonement. They regarded His death as a satisfaction to divine justice only in so far as it furnished the ground on which God as a righteous God could forgive sin; and they held it as not

<sup>1</sup> *Rel. Christ. Instit.* v. 19, 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiperkins*, p. 76.

securing salvation to any, but simply as placing salvation within the reach of all. There is some confusion and some variety in their statements regarding the kind of satisfaction that was rendered by Christ to the divine justice, but they all agree in repudiating the notion that it was of the nature of a *quid pro quo*, of an equivalent, either *ejusdem* or *tantidem*, rendered by Christ for the sins of any portion of the human race. That Christ's death merited something for man they held, but what it merited was not salvation for any, but the potentiality of salvation for all.

b. The arguments by which this view is chiefly sustained are these:—

(a) Scripture expressly declares in many passages that Christ died for all men. Those who take the hyper-Calvinistic view, it is true, endeavour to get over this by saying that "all" in these passages is not the all of totality but the all of distribution, and means "men of all sorts," Jews as well as Gentiles. But to this it is replied that the word "all" can be taken distributively only when it is used of something of which there are different species; when it is used of that of which there is only one species it is used only collectively; and as there is but one species of man, "all men" must mean not "every kind of men," but "all men collectively," the whole of mankind.

(b) Scripture expressly states that Christ's work had for its object the saving of the world, the taking away of the sins of the world, and such like, which is incompatible with any limitation of those on whose behalf or for whose benefit He acted and suffered. To avoid this conclusion it has been urged by Calvinists that in such passages "world" means the "elect world;" but such an evasion cannot be permitted, because *α.* this limitation of the meaning of the word is arbitrary and unauthorized; *β.* it cannot be shown from the usage of Scripture that the elect can be properly designated by the term "world;" and *γ.* in one of the most remarkable passages in which the term is used in connection with the design of our Lord's advent and work (John iii. 16), the "world," for whose behoof God in His love sent His Son, is expressly distinguished from those who shall be saved through faith in Him; and as the former includes the latter,

the "world" here can only mean mankind at large, of whom those that believe and are saved form a part.

(c) Our Lord said that He had come into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. As the language here is indefinite, it is best understood of men generally; at least, it is doing violence to such a statement to interpret it as meaning that Christ came into the world to seek and to save only a select portion of those that were lost.

(d) In Rom. xiv. 15 the apostle says, "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died;" and in 1 Cor. viii. 11 the apostle, in an analogous passage, speaks of a brother for whom Christ died "perishing." Obviously, therefore, the apostle contemplated the possibility of some for whom Christ died perishing or being destroyed; and, consequently, Christ's death must have had respect to others than the elect who shall be saved.

(e) Scripture calls on all men to believe in Christ, and represents this as an imperative duty. But to believe in Christ is to believe in Him as a Saviour, and we can believe in Him as a Saviour only as we regard His propitiatory work as valid for our salvation. Now it is valid for our salvation only as He died for us. But if Christ did not die for all men, then since it has been revealed to no one that he is among those for whom Christ died, it is impossible for any one to determine that Christ has died for him. Hence, when any man has Christ preached to him, he cannot be sure that he is warranted to believe in Him, and so he would be both bound to believe and yet not bound to believe, which would be absurd.

(f) If Christ did not die for all men, no one can be condemned for unbelief. For as no one can be bound to believe what is not true, those for whom Christ did not die cannot be bound to believe in Him, and consequently cannot be condemned for unbelief though the gospel is preached to them, which is clearly against Scripture.

c. Such are the arguments commonly adduced by writers of the Remonstrant school in support of their view of the nature and extent of the atonement. Some of them may be set aside at once as of no weight. (a) Thus, when it is argued that faith in Christ means faith that He died for us,



and that such faith cannot be demanded of all men except on the assumption that He died for all, it is overlooked that the warrant for faith is not our knowledge of what Christ did, but God's assurance that on the ground of what Christ did all who believe on Him shall be saved. A man may have no knowledge at all of what Christ did on our behalf, and yet if he be made acquainted with the divine assurance that whosoever believeth in Christ shall be saved, he is bound to believe in Christ, and is verily guilty if he does not believe. It is a mistake to suppose that faith in Christ means faith that He died for me. Faith in Christ means faith in the sufficiency of His work to save all who put their trust in Him; and as we have this confidence not from any theoretical view we may have of the nature and extent of His work, but simply from God's sure word of promise, it matters not to this whether we believe that He died for all men or only for the elect. I may have some difficulty in seeing how God can make to all men such an offer if the atonement made by Christ is not sufficient for all; but if I am sure God has made the offer, that is my warrant for accepting it; on that ground I am bound to accept it, and I shall justly be held guilty if I do not accept it on that ground. All the arguments, therefore, urged by the Remonstrants in support of their views, on the assumption that only upon them can faith in Christ be urged on all men and demanded of them as imperative, fall to the ground.

(b) Of more weight are the arguments adduced by the Remonstrants from the statements of Scripture as to the relation of Christ's work to the world and to men universally. It seems impossible to reconcile such statements with any view of the atonement which would limit its sufficiency to any portion of the human race to the exclusion of the rest. If He came into the world to give Himself a ransom for all, if He came to seek and to save the lost, if He was sent that whosoever believeth on Him should be saved, and if He was a propitiation for the sins of the world, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that in some sense His death was designed and fitted to secure a benefit that should be coextensive with the wants of the race and free to all the sons of men. But whilst the Arminian scheme does justice

to these statements of Scripture, there are others which it either overlooks or sets aside. If Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, it also tells us that He gave His life a ransom for His sheep; if it tells us that whosoever believes shall be saved, it also tells those who are saved that they are "bought with a price," that they are "redeemed by the blood of Christ," that they are His "purchased possession," and that He gave Himself for them in a sense in which He did not give Himself for all; and it tells us that if God sent His Son to be a propitiation for the whole world, it also tells us that there are some of the human race whom the Father hath "given" to the Son, whom He had "chosen" unto salvation before the foundation of the world, and to whom, therefore, His Son could not but have had a special reference in the making of atonement for sin. Indeed, if we accept the Scripture doctrine of election at all, we must suppose that Christ had a special intention of saving the elect in the offering of Himself as a sacrifice for sins. But more of this afterwards. I make these remarks at present merely to indicate that if we would have a theory of the atonement that shall be in accordance with *all* the declarations of Scripture, we can as little accept that of the Remonstrants as we can that of the High Calvinists.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (3.) *Moderate Calvinistic Theories.*

We have seen that neither the theory of the High Calvinists nor that of the Remonstrants can be adopted as a complete theory of the atonement, or as fully in accordance with Scripture statements. At the same time, it is manifest that on both sides there is something to be said—that neither is wholly wrong nor wholly unsupported by Scripture. This induces the conclusion that neither view is to be wholly

rejected; and begets the hope that a careful and candid consideration of the reasons on both sides, and especially of all the statements of Scripture bearing on the subject, may conduct us to some medium or eclectic course between the two, where, by rejecting the errors of both and incorporating what is true in both, we may arrive at a satisfactory theory of the whole subject.

Of the attempts which have been made towards this there are two, not widely differing from each other at first sight, but which are nevertheless in reality sufficiently distinct to divide their respective supporters into two schools, between which controversy has sometimes been conducted not without acerbity. On both sides the distinction enunciated by one of the ancient Fathers, viz. that Christ made satisfaction *sufficienter* for all, but *efficienter* only for some, is accepted; though some, with Dr. Wardlaw, would prefer to say that the atonement was a remedy of universal sufficiency but of limited efficiency, thereby avoiding the ambiguity connected with the phrase "to make satisfaction," which does not mean the same thing in the High Calvinist and in the Remonstrant theology. Both also agree in holding that the efficiency of Christ's redemption is determined by the electing purpose of God. But they differ in this, that the one party hold that God having of His sovereign grace determined to save a certain number of the human race, did devise the atonement as the means of attaining that end; whilst the other party hold that God having in His rectoral capacity devised the atonement as a means of reconciling His mercy and His righteousness, did as a Sovereign determine to limit the universal remedy in the application of it to such only as it was His good pleasure to bring unto salvation. The former of these views has found advocates in Witsius and in Turretine among earlier, and in Marshall, Symington, Cunningham, and Candlish among more recent theologians. The latter view is that advocated by Cameron, Amyrant, R. Baxter, Fuller, Williams, Dwight, Wardlaw, Payne, and others.

a. I select a few passages from writers on both sides that you may have in their own words a statement of their views.

Witsius: "We hold that the obedience and suffering of

Christ, in themselves considered, are, on account of the infinite dignity of His Person, of such worth that would they suffice for the redemption not only of all and each of mankind, but of many myriads more, provided it had pleased God and Christ that He should have been surety and made satisfaction for them. . . . The obedience and sufferings of Christ were of such price that all men without exception coming to Him might obtain perfect salvation in Him. . . . Nevertheless, Christ by the will of God and His own purpose (or intention) did not act as a surety nor make satisfaction nor in any way die for any but all and only those whom the Father gave to Him, and who are actually saved."<sup>1</sup> In another place the same writer says, "For the elect the Lord Jesus impetrated by His satisfaction immunity from all misery and a right to eternal life, through the application of His satisfaction to them in effectual calling, regeneration, sanctification, conservation, and glorification. . . . It appears clearly [from such passages as Matt. xxvi. 28; Gal. i. 4; Tit. ii. 14; Eph. v. 25-27; 1 Tim. i. 15] that the effect of the satisfaction of Christ was not the bare possibility of the remission of our sins and our reconciliation with God, and finally our salvation, of which blessings it could not be that the elect should remain without the enjoyment unless Christ be regarded as having in vain made satisfaction to the Father."<sup>2</sup>

Turretine: "The common opinion of the Reformed is that Christ was of the mere goodwill (*εὐδοκία*) of the Father destined and given to be a Redeemer and Head, not to all men, but to a certain number of men constituting through the divine election His mystical body; and for these alone Christ, fully conscious of His own calling, in order to fulfil the decree of election and the counsel of the Father, willed and determined to die, and to the infinite price of His death to add the most efficacious and special voluntary intervention of substituting Himself for them." He then goes on to say that "the question is not as to the value and sufficiency of Christ's death, which is admitted to be of infinite value, and sufficient for the redemption of all, but as to the counsel of God in giving His Son, and the intention of Christ in dying, whether

<sup>1</sup> *De Econom. Fœderum*, Bk. II. ch. ix. § 2, 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. II. ch. vii. § 2.

this had respect to all men so as to obtain salvation for them or only to the elect.”<sup>1</sup>

There is some slight indistinctness in these statements, arising from the writer's not clearly distinguishing between the design of the atonement in itself and the intention of Christ in making it; but there can be no doubt that what they intended is that the atonement was designed in and by itself to secure the salvation of the elect, and that it has effected that design, though of value sufficient to have secured the salvation of all had it been designed for this.

That this is the view adopted by more recent theologians of this school may be made very apparent by one or two citations.

The first I take is from the work of the late Dr. Marshall of Kirkintilloch, on *The Atonement*. In reference to the work of Christ he lays down the proposition that “For all men, for sinners in general, the Saviour died. . . . He died in their nature, He died in their stead, He died doing honour to the law which they had violated, making reparation to the justice they had provoked, bearing the curse to which they were subjected, suffering the death to which they were doomed. In other words, He died removing every legal obstruction that lay in the way of their obtaining life, rendering it consistent with the holiness and justice of the Most High, with the security of His government, with the claims of His law, to justify and save them, provided they should believe” (pp. 70, 71). Was then the atonement made for all men? No, says Dr. Marshall; it was “a purpose to save coupled with the providing of a general remedy in order to carry that purpose into effect,” and those whose salvation the atonement thus contemplated are “Christ's own people,” the elect. It follows from this that the atonement, though of infinite worth, was in reality made only for the few, and this the writer expressly affirms again and again throughout his book in such utterances as these: “Christ came to redeem a select number who had been chosen to life;” He came “to save the objects of the Father's choice;” “the object of whatsoever He did or suffered while in the world is sufficiently defined; it had reference, strictly speaking, not to all men, but to some only.”

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xiv. qu. 14, § 8-10.

If in other places of his book Dr. Marshall writes as if he held that the atonement was limited, not in itself, but only by the divine purpose as to its application, this must be put to the account of a certain confusion of thought or inaccuracy of statement on his part. As his object in writing his book was to prove that "Christ died for some men and not for all," he must, in fairness, be held as maintaining that the limitation of the atonement was in itself, in that it was designed and made only for the elect, not merely the purpose of God as to the application of its benefits.

One of the ablest defenders of this view of the atonement was the late Dr. Symington of Glasgow. From him I take the following statements: "Christ died, satisfied divine justice, and made atonement only for such as are saved." "The death of Christ is regarded as a legal satisfaction to the law and justice of God on behalf of elect sinners." "We hold by the view that the sufferings of Christ are to be regarded in the light of a moral satisfaction to the law and justice of God, which would have been requisite had there been but one sinner to be saved, and had that sinner had but one sin; and which would have been adequate had the number to be saved been to any conceivable extent greater than it is."

The same substantially is the view of Dr. Candlish. Whilst, on the one hand, he asserts "the universality of the Son's mediation, which has regard to man as such, without excepting any portion of the race;" he, on the other, maintains that "in the strict and proper sense, Christ was really, truly, and personally a substitute in room of the elect, and in room of the elect only."

These extracts may suffice to give you a just view of the doctrine of the school to which the writers belong, regarding the nature and extent of the atonement. In their view there was no exact equivalence between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings due to the elect, nor was the death of Christ merely the price paid for the salvation of a certain number. His work possessed infinite value, and His sufferings and death rendered to the justice of God a satisfaction adequate to the salvation of all mankind; but what Christ did and suffered was not designed to effect the salvation of more than a certain

number, and for them and them only He acted as a substitute and surety. Though the atonement was of boundless sufficiency its efficiency is limited, inasmuch as by the divine decree it was made only for the elect.

*b.* Passing on to the other view to which I have referred, I select the following statements of it from writers of eminence:—

Dr. Edward Williams: “Here it is proper to notice the *design* of God in the appointment of an atoning sacrifice. And for illustrating this important point it appears to me of great use to recollect the twofold character of God, that of an equitable governor and that of an arbitrary dispenser of benefits; in other words, a Judge and a Sovereign. In both characters God is supreme, having none above Him, in whatever capacity He acts. . . . As it is evident from the whole tenor of Scripture, and from the nature of the case, that God acts in these twofold characters towards His rational creatures, it follows that it is worthy of Him to have corresponding designs. Let us apply this to the work of Christ and the price of redemption. As a Governor, I humbly conceive, His design in this great and glorious medium of happiness was to lay an adequate foundation for every human subject of His government on which he may hope for the favour of God; and on which he may seek remission of sin, justification, holiness, happiness,—in one word, *salvation*,—on the terms prescribed; terms worthy of God and our rational nature. But, on the rejection or neglect of these terms, the sinner has no one to blame but himself, and the Supreme Ruler will appear clear and glorious when He judges and condemns him for neglecting so great salvation.

“But when we consider the design of God in the character of a Sovereign, we may regard the same object, the invaluable price of redemption, as an adequate foundation for actually redeeming from all evil those who are eventually saved; and for imparting to them the influence of the Spirit, whereby they comply with the terms proposed, and enjoy the promised blessings. As God does nothing without design and without an adequate ground for it, and as forming a vital union with Christ, a spiritual renovation by the Holy Spirit, upholding the soul in the midst of temptations and formidable dangers,

and finally investing soul and body with eternal life and glory, are the acts of His sovereign pleasure; His design, I apprehend, in substituting the atoning sacrifice, was to lay a suitable basis for these acts."<sup>1</sup> According to Dr. Williams, then, the design of the atonement was not the securing of the salvation of the elect, but the laying of a sufficient basis or foundation on which salvation in all its fulness might be offered to and bestowed on men.

Dr. Payne: "I believe in the unlimited, universal, infinite sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. . . . I believe it was the intention of God, as *the Moral Governor*, in giving His Son as a sacrifice for sin, to provide a remedy commensurate with the disease. I believe, on the other hand, in the limited application of the atonement. I believe it was the intention of God, as a *Sovereign*, to render the remedy effectual by special and sovereign influence in the case of certain individuals *only* who are affected by the general disease, so that the intention of God as a *Sovereign* and as a *Ruler* in reference to the atonement is different, the one being general, the other particular."

"Contemplating the whole human race as condemned, Jehovah did not determine to inflict punishment on some and to pardon others, but to provide a sacrifice of infinite worth by which every obstacle to the bestowment of mercy might be removed; and then, as Moral Governor or Judge, to offer pardon to all who might choose to accept it, in the only manner in which it could be bestowed. . . . Jehovah, however, while as a Moral Governor He exhibits mercy to all, as a Sovereign imparts, in the case of many, a disposition to embrace it, and thus secures their salvation. 'The others He leaves to their own free agency.' . . . With reference to those whose wills He influences by sovereign goodness to receive it, He previously determined to do so."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Wardlaw: "The third view holds the atonement to have been a general remedy with a particular application, a vindication or display of the righteousness of God such as to render forgiveness consistent with the perfection of the divine character; leaving the Supreme Governor and Judge

<sup>1</sup> *Moderate Calvinism defended*, pp. 187-189.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*, etc., pp. 210, 227.



in the free exercise of the mercy in which He delights, to dispense it according to His sovereign pleasure more or less extensively."<sup>1</sup>

Something like this view seems to have been held by the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, for he sets forth his opinion in the following views: "The merit of Christ as concerning its sufficiency belongs to all, but not as concerning its efficacy; which happens partly by reason of free will and partly by reason of God's election, whereby the effects and virtues of Christ's merits are mercifully bestowed on some, and by the just judgment of God withheld from others."

These statements will put you in possession of the two schemes or modes of representing the atonement adopted by moderate Calvinists. Apparently, the difference between the two is very slight, but it is such as to occasion a marked diversity of statement, and it has been the cause of considerable controversy. You will find a very able discussion of the question in Turretine's *Institutio Theologica*, vol. ii. p. 495 ff., Loe. xiv. qu. 14. Some years ago an animated discussion of it took place between Dr. Synnington of Glasgow and Dr. Wardlaw; the former in a work on the Atonement, and in the pages of the *Scottish Presbyterian Magazine*; the latter in his *Discourses on the Atonement*, especially the preface to the second edition, and in his lectures on *Systematic Theology*, published since his death. Dr. Payne also took part in the discussion, especially in his pamphlet containing strictures on Dr. Marshall's work on *The Atonement*, published under the designation of an "English Congregational minister."

c. Having placed before you the statements of writers on both sides, I would now proceed to place out distinctly the questions really at issue between them; and then to offer a few hints bearing on a just solution of the whole. For the sake of brevity and distinctness we shall call the one the advocates of a definite, the other the advocates of a general atonement. The questions at issue between them are these,—

(a) Is the atonement, both as to its general design and as to its special application, to be traced wholly to the sovereign love of God, or must we distinguish between God as a Ruler

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 445.

and God as a Sovereign, and refer the design of the atonement to Him in His rectoral character, and the application of it to His sovereignty?

(b) Whether are we to regard God as determining to save sinners of the human race, and in order to this devising the atonement as the method of attaining this, or to regard Him as devising the atonement as a method of making satisfaction for sin, and then determining the application of it beneficially to a limited number of the human race? Or, to put it in another form and more briefly, Did the devising of the atonement precede, or did it follow in the order of nature, the purpose of God to save a certain portion of the human race? Or, to put it still otherwise, Was the atonement devised by God in order to carry out and secure His purpose in election, or was that purpose formed in order to give effect to the atonement?

(c) Was the atonement made for sin or for sinners? in other words, Was it designed to remove the obstacles which man's sin put in the way of the salvation of any, or was it designed to secure the actual salvation of certain individual transgressors?

(d) Now, in answer to these questions, the one party says, "The atonement is wholly to be referred to the sovereign love of God; He determined to save a people chosen for Himself, and in order to this, that His grace in extending to them salvation might be compatible with the claims of His government, the demands of His law and the glory of His own character, He devised the scheme which was accomplished by Jesus Christ, incarnate God, by whose obedience unto death a full compensation has been made for the transgressions of those whom God purposed to save, and their redemption secured as the reward of the Saviour's obedience and suffering—the atonement being not so much for sin as for sinners."

The answer of the other party would run somewhat thus: "The atonement of Christ was made for sin, to remove it out of the way of man's acceptance with God, not directly and properly for sinners; it is to be traced to the rectoral love of God, who sought the salvation of man in connection with the manifestation of His perfect regard to holiness and rectitude;

having this in view, He devised the atonement as a means of manifesting His righteousness; and this being accomplished, He as a Sovereign was free to apply the benefits of the work thus done to as many of the human race as He was pleased to choose."

d. Such, in substance, are the views of these two branches of the Moderate Calvinistic School as to the nature and extent of the atonement. I would now proceed to offer some observations bearing more precisely on the decision of the question now before us.

(a) It is admitted on both sides that the worth of Christ's sacrifice is all-sufficient, is of infinite sufficiency, but that it is determined in its actual efficiency by the purpose of God. That purpose having reference to the actual saving of a limited portion of the human race, limits the efficiency of that which in itself is of unlimited sufficiency. Now, without speculating upon the *order* in which the divine purposes are formed, which would be venturing, as we believe, into a sphere beyond our reach, we may competently propose such a question as this, "Did God in forming the scheme of atonement intend and purpose to save men thereby, or did He not?" This is a practical question, and we shall find much turns upon it. For, if God did not purpose to save certain men when He purposed the atonement, how came He to constitute His Son a Priest, a King, a Head, a Surety in the covenant of redemption? These are all *relative* terms, for there can be no priest without parties for whom he acts as a priest, no king without subjects, no head without a body, no surety without persons for whom he stands surety; so that unless God in appointing His Son to these offices appointed also those of the race of men for whom He was to act in these offices, the appointment was vain and unworthy of God; it was, in short, a mere empty name. But, if God in appointing Christ to these offices appointed also those for whom He had to act, then He must have intended to save thereby certain individuals of the race, and the saving of them must have entered as an essential and integral element into the design of the atonement. In this view the appointment of the atonement and the determination of those to whom its benefits should be applied, cannot with any propriety

be thought as separate and consecutive acts or purposes, but must have formed one purpose in the divine mind.

(b) It may tend to test this question in the light of Scripture if we follow the plan I am about to suggest. The old divines were wont to speak of the death of Christ viewed *τελικώς* and the death of Christ viewed *ἐκβατικώς*, meaning by the former the death of Christ viewed in relation to its *design* or *intention*, and by the latter the death of Christ viewed in relation to *what it actually accomplishes*. Now, suppose you take these two words as headings of distinct columns, and under the former place all the passages of Scripture which announce the *purpose* of Christ's death, and under the latter those which simply describe the *result* or *effect* of Christ's death, or the consequences actually flowing from it, you will, I venture to say, find that under the former you have got those passages which are of a more special kind, and under the latter those of a more general kind. There may be one or two passages of a doubtful character, but in the main I believe this will be the result of such a classification. Now, assuming this to be the case, the conclusion to which we are thereby conducted is that the specific, purposed design of Christ's death was the salvation of His own people, those whom the Father had given Him; and that the aspect which His work bears to the world at large is *ecclastic*, that is, we have not here its main and primary design, but a result accomplished simply in passing, as it were,—a collateral and incidental effect of Christ's work, not that which it was primarily purposed to secure.

(c) We shall be conducted to the same conclusion if we look at the subject in the analogy which it bears to other of God's works. It seems to be a rule of God's operation to make what He appoints for some main end subservient at the same time to several collateral and more general ends. Man, in the narrowness of his resources and wisdom, has to make a new contrivance for each new end he wishes to attain; whereas God by one single scheme or arrangement accomplishes several, it may be many ends. We see this in the kingdom of nature, where the sun, for instance, appointed specially and primarily to give light to the planets, is made to subserve a vast variety of other ends in the economy of

nature. We see it in the moral world, where relations instituted directly for the attainment of one end are made subservient to several other ends. We see it in the miracles wrought by our Lord, the main design of which was to establish the divinity of His mission, but which He made to answer other and more general ends connected with His mission and work. Now, this being a pervading characteristic of God's working, analogy would lead us to expect the same in the greatest of all His works; in other words, we should expect to find the work of Christ having one main specific design, but made to answer other collateral designs in the divine administration. But this expectation will be fulfilled if we regard the atonement of Christ as designed primarily and specially to secure the salvation of those given unto Him by the Father, whilst as a scheme of infinite wisdom it at the same time serves many other ends; whereas, if we regard it as a general provision admitting of special application, we put it out of analogy with God's mode of operation in other manifestations of His power and wisdom.

(d) It must be admitted on all hands, on the express testimony of Scripture, that Jesus Christ appeared, acted, suffered, and merited as a substitute for men. This is a truth which we must be careful to preserve, for it is one inseparably connected with the doctrine of atonement; one, therefore, which cannot be overlooked or diluted without materially injuring or enfeebling that doctrine in our conception and representation of it. But for whom, let us ask, was Christ a substitute? Here there are only two suppositions that can be made: either He acted and merited as a substitute for all men, or He acted and merited as a substitute only for His own. The former of these suppositions is negatived by the fact that all men are not saved; for, as the idea of substitutionary acting involves that all for whom the substitute acted are held as acting in him and consequently as enjoying all he has acquired, we cannot suppose it possible that Christ should have thus acted for all men and yet any man should fail of that for which Christ acted and which He merited. But if we adopt the latter supposition, that it is only those who are actually saved, only those who are Christ's own people, for whom He acted as a

substitute, then we cannot but believe that in His acting He had special and primary respect to them, and that God in appointing Him to act as a substitute must have had special reference to their salvation as the end to be secured by Christ's work.

(c) The same conclusion is reached from the representation of the sufferings of Christ being a price paid for the salvation of men. Here it is persons alone who can be thought of as the object of the Saviour's work, and the question arises, Who are the persons whom He hath bought with a price or redeemed by His blood? And, in answer to this, we can have no hesitation in saying, Those only who are actually saved by Him. For it is worthy of notice that the Bible never says that Christ redeemed, or purchased, or gave a price for the world or all men. Where such phraseology is employed, it is always in reference to persons who are viewed as actually in Christ and enjoying the benefits of His salvation. There is one passage, indeed, which may seem to present an exception to this, 1 Tim. ii. 6, where the apostle says of Christ, *ὁ δὸς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*. But this is by no means decisive, because the use of the preposition *ὑπὲρ* here leads to the conclusion that what the apostle says may be simply that Christ gave Himself as a ransom-price *for the benefit or advantage* of all, not that He bought or redeemed all by giving Himself for them, but that in giving Himself He designed that an advantage should thence accrue to all. And that this is His meaning is rendered probable by the fact that the apostle adduces this statement in support of his injunction that prayer and thanksgiving are to be offered for all men, this being an advantage to which all are entitled, seeing that Christ redeemed His people, not merely for their own benefit, but for the benefit of all, that through their redemption the world might be advantaged, as by other things so specially by their prayers. At any rate this passage, I believe, stands alone as even seeming to teach that Christ gave Himself for all men as a ransom-price. In every other case the idea of a purchase is connected only with the people of Christ, those actually saved through Him. It is His sheep for whom He as the good Shepherd gave His life; it is His Church for which He gave

Himself; it is His saved ones, as His purchased possession, whom He hath redeemed by His blood. This is the general tenor of Scripture representation, and we are bound to accept it as setting before us a real fact. But if Christ has bought, purchased, or redeemed His people, then their salvation must have formed a special end to be secured by Him in what He did as the Redeemer. As a conscious and intelligent Agent, He knew what He was giving Himself for; and as that was the purchasing of a people for Him to be His peculiar people, it seems to follow inevitably that this must have been the design of His atonement; and if the design, the *main* design, seeing it is the thing actually secured.

(f) Those who advocate the doctrine of a general atonement are accustomed to lay stress on the distinction between an act and its intention as applied to the work of Christ. "God," says Dr. Payne, "created the world to show forth His glory; but the act of creation was one thing, the design of that act another. Christ made atonement to lay foundation for a great system of moral government, to open the door of mercy to all men, to furnish an honourable and safe ground on which pardon might be imparted to all men on their repentance and faith; and again to bring many sons to glory. These, among others, were no doubt *objects* sought to be accomplished by the atonement. The Saviour *intended* to secure them, and therefore they will be secured. But in this case, as in the former, the atonement was one thing, the intention another. The purpose to save the Church by His death no doubt accompanied the atonement in consequence of the eternal election of its members to life everlasting; but it was something extraneous to the atonement. It was an adjunct merely—not constituting its essence or nature. It was not necessary to the validity of the atonement. It did not give it sufficiency, but it secured its efficiency." This passage seems to me full of strange statements. Dr. Payne seems to think that it was the purpose of Christ that gave validity to the atonement. 'Now this no advocate of a definite atonement has ever, so far as I am aware, maintained. But if this were assumed it would be utterly fatal to Dr. Payne's position; for as the only purpose we know that Christ had in making atonement was the saving of His

Church, the whole validity of the atonement must rest on this purpose. How strange, also, is it to say that the only thing which is by the atonement effected was not that which it was essentially fitted and designed to effect, but was an adjunct merely—something that might never have happened at all, and yet the validity of the atonement have remained unaffected! But, not to dwell on minute criticisms, let us come at once to the distinction on which Dr. Payne lays so much stress—the distinction between an act and its intention, *i.e.* of course, the intention of the agent in doing it. The distinction is obvious enough, and in relation to the work of Christ it is one which every one can make. We all know what Christ did; He suffered and He died; and we can all be sure that He had a purpose, an intention, an end to secure in this. What, then, was this intention? Dr. Payne says it was the securing of a great many objects, and among the rest the salvation of the Church by the furnishing of an honourable and safe ground on which pardon might be imparted to all men. We say that the intention of Christ was immediately and directly to save His Church, and that in order to secure this along with certain collateral and secondary ends, He paid a price which not only satisfied God's justice for them, but being of infinite value is sufficient for the salvation of all. Now this is a mere statement of the case: What is to decide between the two positions? I answer, Dr. Payne has himself furnished us with a valid criterion by which our decision may be determined. "It is important to observe," he says, "that the decrees of God are exactly co-extensive with the acts of God. They reach as far as the latter, but they do not go beyond them. God does what He decrees, and decrees what He does."<sup>1</sup> Now, what Dr. Payne says here so justly of the decrees of God we may say of His purposes or intentions, which are not really different from His decrees. What He intends He does, and what He does He intends. The act and the intention are co-extensive; and we can be sure of the divine intention only from the divine act. Now, to apply this to the question before us: What we are sure of is the salvation of Christ's own people; this is what He really does by His atone-

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on *Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 36.



ment; and we may infer, therefore, with confidence, on the principle Dr. Payne has laid down, that this was His design, purpose, or intention in what He did and suffered. We hold it therefore more correct to say that Christ came to save His Church, and that in order to secure that He offered a sacrifice of infinite worth adequate to atone for the sins of all men, than to say Christ came to open a door by which all men might be saved, and that He took advantage of this, or made application of it, for the salvation of His own people.

I may observe, further, that it seems to me impossible, for any practical end, to regard the work of Christ apart from His design or intention in that work. The two are inseparably connected in the whole conception of the atonement. Apart from His purpose and intention in suffering and dying, His death and sufferings are mere isolated facts that have no special significance. It was His purpose by His suffering and dying to save men, to purchase a people for Himself as His peculiar possession, that gave these mere historical facts a significance as effectual for the redemption of men. We cannot therefore, as it appears to me, think the atonement apart from our Lord's intention in making it; and therefore to call on us to lay stress on the distinction between what Christ did and His intention in doing it, is to invite us to make a distinction sufficiently obvious, but in this case of no practical value.

(g) Once more, I would observe that on the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement it is not easy to see what necessity there is for the *continuous* exercise of Christ's agency on behalf of His people. If what Christ has done be simply to open a door by which all may enter in, of what further use can He be to us, or what further need have we of Him? The door is opened; we have only to enter in, grateful to Him who has done so much for us, but not requiring His aid any more. I need not say how far this is from according with Scripture statement concerning Christ's offices and work, and our constant dependence on Him. Not only is it through Him that we have access to the Father, but in Him and with Him. He must take us by the hand and bring us unto God, and it is only as He holds us and helps us and pleads for us

that we can continue in the path of salvation. With all this the doctrine of a definite atonement accords. According to it, Christ in dying for men had special reference to the purchasing for Himself of a peculiar people, comprising all that the Father had given unto Him, the rescuing of the scattered members of His own Body that He might reform them again into a glorious Body, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," and the bringing unto God of His lost children, presenting them with acceptance unto Him, and making continual intercession for them so as to save them unto the uttermost. We are thus brought to realize Christ's continual agency on our behalf, and our constant need of Him as alike the author and the finisher of faith.

(h) For these reasons, which I have rather hinted at than fully unfolded, I am constrained to adopt the view, of which I consider Turretine the best expounder, viz. that the work of Christ, though of infinite value and having many important ends to answer in the divine administration, was yet in its original purpose and main design intended to secure the redemption of Christ's own people, given unto Him by the Father, and who are His purchased possession, His special treasure, the sheep of His pasture, the members of His Body. Indeed, I cannot see how any one retaining the doctrine of election and of effectual calling can well abide in any other conclusion. Where these doctrines are denied, and where it is held that the door being opened it remains simply with each individual to enter or not as he pleases, and that Christ simply accepts those who so please, it is obviously only consistent and proper to deny that Christ had or could have any special intention of saving one more than another in what He did and suffered. But where it is held that God has purposed from all eternity to save a certain portion of our race, through the work of Christ, and that these He will certainly save through the operation in them of His Holy Spirit, by which they are in time brought to Christ, it seems to me impossible in consistency to deny that Christ must have specially intended that this purpose of God should take effect through His sacrifice, and consequently that in offering that sacrifice He specially designed thereby to save His people.

At the same time, as I have said, I do not see that it is of

very great moment practically which of the two views we have been considering we adopt. On either view we may make a free offer of salvation to all men on the ground of the all-sufficiency of Christ's work in the assurance that whosoever accepts that offer and embraces Christ shall be saved; whilst, at the same time, there must ever be present to our minds the conviction that, unless to those who are chosen of God unto salvation, and into whose hearts He will send His Holy Spirit that they may believe and be saved, these offers will be in vain. As Dr. Pye Smith has observed, "The gracious decree of election and the designs of redemption must be in perfect unison. But whether the relation of the former to the latter immediately regards the original *performance* or the successive *application* of the Saviour's mediatorial work does not, I acknowledge, appear to me to be a question very necessary or profitable, or that it is clearly solved in the divine oracles; and where they are silent it is our wisdom to remain so likewise."<sup>1</sup> In this I wholly agree, only when men will not remain silent on such questions one is forced to consider whether what they say is just and true or not.

e. Holding the twofold aspect of Christ's work, I would now, in a series of propositions, state briefly how this may be distributed or placed out.

(a) The work of Christ had a general and a special design.

(b) In the former, it has respect to all men, and God's dealings with them; in the latter, it has respect to the elect from amongst men, and God's dealings with them.

(c) The former respects God as the Moral Governor of all; the latter respects God also as the gracious Father of His people.

(d) The former respects the covenant of grace under which God deals kindly with the world at large; the latter respects the covenant of redemption in which God hath engaged to give His Son a reward for His obedience unto death.

(e) In virtue of the former, God continues to the race providential blessings forfeited by sin as well as the benefits of Christianity in its outward influences and social bearings, and in the free offer to all of spiritual blessings; in virtue of the latter, God confers upon those whom He hath chosen of

<sup>1</sup> *Four Discourses, etc.*, pp. 72, 73, 2nd ed.

His own good pleasure, faith, repentance, pardon, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.

(*f*) In virtue of the former, all men may be freely invited to come to Christ, because there is sufficiency in His atoning work to meet the case of all, and procure salvation for all if they will accept it, and men may be urged to this acceptance by a consideration of the blessings which already they in common with others enjoy through Christ; in virtue of the latter, believers may be exhorted to gratitude, confidence, and obedience. To men generally the preacher may say with all confidence, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;"—to believers in Christ they may say, Christ loved you, and gave Himself for you; wherefore, "Glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are His."

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (4.) *Recent Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

I have dwelt at some length on the two great antagonistic theories of the atonement, the Calvinistic in its different forms, and the Arminian or Remonstrant, because these have been most extensively embraced, the one or the other, in the Church; because for both the authority of Scripture may be pleaded; and because to one or other of them, as the ultimate type, all theories of atonement which do not wholly abnegate the very idea of atonement may be referred. Of late years a number of other theories have been promulgated, and have met with more or less acceptance both in this country and in America. Though these cannot with propriety be classed as theories of the atonement, for they virtually set aside that concept, and in the majority of instances are to be regarded rather as rationalistic speculations than as expositions of Scripture doctrine; yet, as they profess to show the relation of Christ's work to man's redemption, it may be proper to

take notice of them in connection with the subject of which we have been treating.

a. I may pass over with slight mention the Socinian theory, which resolves our Lord's work into the mere furnishing of an *example* for men to follow so as to be saved ; for in this theory the idea of atonement wholly disappears, and the salvation of man is made to depend solely on his following the good example set him by Christ. There was no propitiation made for man's sins by Christ, no reconciliation effected by Him between God and man. There was simply a pattern of holy obedience and pious living exhibited, by the following of which man may secure the divine approbation and inherit eternal blessedness. I need not point out how utterly this theory ignores the most express declarations of Scripture as to the nature and design of our Lord's work on earth, taking no note of that on which our Lord Himself and His apostles lay special stress, viz. the giving of His life for the sheep, His offering Himself as a sacrifice for sin, the shedding of His blood, His death upon the cross ; and resolving the whole of His work into the example which He set in His life of virtue and piety for men to follow. It may be observed, also, that this theory is burdened with the difficulty of accounting for our Lord's peculiar depression and distress under the afflictions which came upon Him. Whence that exceeding and deadly sorrow under which He sank at the prospect of His final sufferings ? whence His agony in the garden, and His almost despairing wail upon the cross ? Many of His followers, called to suffer for His name, have displayed not only calm fortitude, but triumphant exultation under the severest sufferings and in the prospect of death. Whence this difference between them and Him whom they professed to follow ? Were they strong and brave, while He was feeble and timorous ? To suppose this would be to pronounce His example imperfect, and to say that He failed in that which, according to this theory, was His sole work on earth. It is only by admitting what this theory rejects, viz. the *peculiar* character of our Lord's obedience and sufferings, as bearing the sins of men and suffering in their stead, that the fact referred to can be accounted for. When He, though Himself sinless, appeared standing in the room of sinners, He bore "a

weight of woe such as has never been undergone by human martyrs, inasmuch as He bore the imputation to Himself of that accursed thing which He cannot look upon without abhorrence.”<sup>1</sup>

b. Another theory of the nature and design of Christ's work on earth is that He came to reveal to men the Father, to present to them in His own person and acting a true representation of the character, perfections, and working of God, and thereby at once to satisfy the longings of the human heart after God, and to win men to God by the manifestation of the beauty of His character and the greatness of His love to His creature, man. Now, it must be admitted that in this there is no small portion of truth, and truth that is very precious and important. That Christ came to reveal to us the Father, Scripture expressly states: “No man,” says John (i. 18), “hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him* (ἐξηγήσατο);” and that He was in Himself a revelation or manifestation of God we have His own words to assure us, for said He on one occasion, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John xiv. 9); and His apostles, in various forms of phraseology, assure us of the same thing, telling us that He was the image (εἰκών) of the invisible God, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, God manifested in the flesh (2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3; 1 Tim. iii. 16). It is also a truth that it is by the manifestation of God's love to men by Christ that they are drawn to God and brought to be reconciled to Him and to serve Him. But it is also a truth that it is by the *propitiatory* work of Christ that these other truths are chiefly illustrated and acquire their power to influence men and draw them to God. It was not by His doctrine or in His person alone or chiefly that our Lord revealed to men the Father, and showed God's love to man; it was by taking upon Him our sins and making propitiation for sin, by becoming our substitute and suffering on our behalf, by His being given up by God that He might by His obedience unto death atone for our transgressions, and open a way through which the mercy of God might be extended to us and we be reconciled to Him. On this Scripture is most explicit

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Doctrine of Atonement*, p. 158.

(Rom. iii. 24-26, v. 8, 10; 2 Cor. v. 18, 21; Col. i. 19, 20; 1 John iv. 9, 10). The testimony of these passages is clear and emphatic. They tell us that it is by the expiatory sufferings and death of Christ that both the righteousness and the love of God are declared or made manifest to us; that it is through them that God is seen to be just whilst He is justifying the ungodly and remitting the sins of the sinner; that it is by Christ's death, by His blood shed on the cross, that we are justified, reconciled to God, and saved; that it is by Christ's dying for us that God's love is commended to us; that it is by His sending His Son to be a propitiation for our sins that God's love to us is so displayed as to constrain us to love Him in return. Any representation, therefore, of the nature and design of our Lord's work on earth which denies or takes no note of the propitiatory character and effect of His manifestation and acting, stands convicted, in the face of such passages, of being not only wholly inadequate as a representation of what Scripture teaches, but of being a gross misrepresentation of the whole matter. But this is not all that may be said of this representation. Supposing that the sufferings of our Lord had no vicarious character and no propitiatory design,—suppose they were not intended to secure for men as sinners substantial benefits in the pardon of their sins and reconciliation to God,—in what way, we may ask, is the love of God to us manifested by these sufferings, as the apostles say it is? If God gave up His Son to the death that we might be saved through Him, His love to us is thereby conspicuously displayed. But if the death of Christ had no such end in view, and has no direct bearing on that end, wherein lies the manifestation by it of God's love to us? If I send my son on a long and dangerous journey to bring relief to some sufferer who has no claim on my benevolence, no person will doubt my regard for the party so benefited; but if I send my son on such a journey, not to confer on the sufferer any real or direct benefit, but merely to assure him and those around him of my interest in him and regard for him, can any one suppose that the mission would be other than fruitless, that any relief would come thereby to the sufferer, or any real conviction be conveyed to him of my regard for him? If, then, the sufferings and death of Christ

were not the means by which the benefit of salvation was to be secured for man, there is no evidence furnished by these of God's love to us, and no incitement furnished by the contemplation of them to us to love God and serve Him in return. There is nothing here to draw us to Him or to constrain us to yield ourselves to Him. On the contrary, is there not something rather to repel us from Him, and to harden us in our rebellion? For if the sufferings of Christ were not for a great and important end which could not otherwise be reached, what are we to think of God, by whom they were not only permitted, but appointed? Or what inducement is there to yield ourselves to God and return to Him in love and obedience, when we see Him subjecting His own Son, the most perfectly holy being that ever lived on earth, and whose love to God was such that it was His meat and His drink to do God's will, to the most painful sufferings for no adequate end? No one, we may say, would ever be drawn to repentance and to piety by such a representation; rather would a contrary effect be produced. For, as has been justly remarked by Henry Rogers, "His sufferings have a double aspect; they affect our apprehensions of Him who appointed them no less than of Him by whom they were endured, and give us but little encouragement to trust in the equity and benignity of the divine administration which thus visits perfect innocence with deeper woes than the foulest guilt in this world was ever subjected to."<sup>1</sup>

c. I pass on to the consideration of another theory of the atonement, that propounded by the late Dr. McLeod Campbell in his work entitled, *The Nature of the Atonement, and its Relation to Remission of Sin and Eternal Life*. In this work there is much that is very valuable as illustrating the effect of Christ's work in the deliverance from sin of the believer in Him, in his restoration to God's favour and likeness, and in his establishment in holiness and blessedness; but in respect of the nature of that work and its relation to these results, the author has advanced a theory which is utterly unsatisfactory, which is in itself vague and confused, and which is not sanctioned by the teachings of Scripture. In dilating on the work of Christ as revealing to us the Father, as bringing man

<sup>1</sup> *Greyson's Letters*.



into the relation of sonship with God, and as securing for man an interest in Christ's intercession, Dr. Campbell pursues a course in which he will be readily and rejoicingly followed by all who regard these as in any way the result of Christ's acting and suffering. But when he comes to the question, What was it in the work of Christ which caused it to have this effect? what was it that made it possible for such results to flow from it? he takes a course in answering it which neither Scripture nor sound reason will be found to justify. His answer is, that Christ atoned for man's sin by making it His own, by offering up to God a perfect confession of that sin, and by a sincere and adequate repentance making expiation for it. Dr. Campbell regards our Lord as having by His incarnation identified Himself with the human race, and, as a natural consequence of this, feeling "the pressure of human sin as a pressure on His own spirit." The suffering He thus endured was in its intensity proportionate to the alienation of His nature from sin. Thus pressed and suffering, He made a perfect confession of sin, "a confession which must in its own nature have been a *perfect Amen* in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man," "an Amen from the depths of the humanity of Christ to the divine condemnation of sin," "a response to the divine wrath against sin which has all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man, a perfect sorrow, a perfect contrition—all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection—all excepting the personal consciousness of sin; and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin, is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due and could alone satisfy it."<sup>1</sup>

(a) It will be seen from these statements that Dr. Campbell does not, as in the theories already examined, virtually set aside the atonement, but holds that a real expiation was made by Christ, and due satisfaction rendered by Him to the divine justice for man's sin. When, however, he resolves this into the confession of sin by Christ identified with humanity, he assumes a position which is utterly untenable. For it rests on assumptions which are simply unintelligible. How can one man be *identical* with the race? That one man may

<sup>1</sup> P. 134 ff.

*represent* any number of other men, may act for them, may suffer as their substitute, may bear their obligations, and deliver them by paying a ransom price for them, are propositions perfectly intelligible. But that one man can be the same as another man, or as concrete humanity, is what no one can conceive. Dr. Campbell, it is true, tells us that it is not "a personal identity" which he affirms as existing on the part of Christ with mankind. But an identity which is not personal is in the case of persons no identity at all. There may be an identity of nature, such as Christ had with mankind when He took on Him our nature, but an identity of nature does not imply an identification of any being with all the beings possessing that nature, else might any one man be identified with the whole race of men. There is an identity of relation such as an advocate has to the person for whom he appears, or the substitute has for the person in whose place he stands; and in this respect Christ may be said to be identified with those for whom He suffered here, and for whom He intercedes above; but this is precisely that doctrine of the substitutionary and vicarious character of His work which Dr. Campbell is anxious to set aside. Discounting these two senses in which Christ may be said to be identified with the human race, there remains no other in which this can be affirmed of Him that is intelligible. This fundamental assumption of Dr. Campbell is a mere collocation of words without meaning—*vox et præterea nihil*.

Not less objectionable is his other fundamental assumption, that Jesus Christ made confession of man's sin to God with deep contrition and sincere repentance. Not only is this affirmed without the slightest authority from Scripture, but the assertion is in itself meaningless. For how can one being repent of the sins of others? How can a sinless being have any such consciousness of guilt as would fill him with poignant anguish and constrain him to prostrate himself before God in abasement and heart-broken contrition? How can one turn from that which he never followed, which he never loved, which he never knew? A representative may indeed confess the sin of his client, as is done not infrequently in our courts of law, when an advocate acknowledges the criminality of the person for whom he appears, and expresses his sorrow for

what he has done. But in this case it is not the advocate who really makes confession, or who has any contrition on account of what has been done; it is the transgressor himself who confesses and is contrite, and the advocate simply conveys a message from him to this effect to the judge. Even so the Lord Jesus, as our Advocate with the Father, may take our confessions and petitions and present them for us to God. But the confessions and petitions must be ours; to say that He confesses our sins as His own, and is contrite because of them, is simply absurd.

(b) Even supposing these fundamental assumptions to be conceded, supposing that Jesus Christ was so identified with the human race that their sin became His, and in His deep sympathy with them that His confession of that sin had "in it all the elements of a perfect contrition and repentance on account of" it, the question arises, How can this be regarded as furnishing an expiation of that sin? If, indeed, it be admitted that Christ suffered as a *substitute for sinners*, it might without absurdity be said that of His sufferings part at least arose from His profound sympathy with those whose sins He bore. But Dr. Campbell will not allow that in any sense Christ's sufferings were vicarious or substitutionary; throughout his book this doctrine is repudiated, and that with much earnestness and emphasis. How, then, we are entitled to ask, did our Lord's sufferings make expiation for man's sin? How can His "perfect contrition and repentance on account of our sins" be held as making atonement for sin? To this I find no better answer from Dr. Campbell than that this suffering of Christ furnishes the most potent inducement to true contrition and repentance on the part of the sinner. But here the idea of expiation or atonement is wholly lost sight of. The sufferings of Christ do not expiate sin; they simply furnish a powerful inducement to the sinner to forsake sin, and with penitent and contrite heart to confess it. Either, then, the sinner's repentance makes the atonement, or there is no atonement made at all. Dr. Campbell thus unwittingly gives up into the hands of the Socinians that cause for which he seems to contend.

(c) If the sufferings of Christ were not propitiatory, if they were not designed to procure for us directly pardon and blessing

from God, how can they be regarded as commending God's love to us? The declaration of the apostle, that "God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8), is full of meaning and force if by Christ's dying for us we understand His dying in our stead as our substitute, or His dying for our behoof as our benefactor. But if His death were not designed and fitted to procure benefit to us, it is impossible to see how His dying in any way showed His love for us, or how God's giving up His Son to die for us in any way commends His love to us; or, indeed, in what sense Christ's death was for us at all. And this leads me to another remark on this theory, viz.:—

(d) That on this theory it is impossible to account for our Lord's dying or being subjected to physical suffering at all. Be it observed the outward privations, sufferings, and death which our Lord endured formed no part, according to Dr. Campbell's view, of His expiatory suffering. That lay solely in the mental anguish that oppressed Him when, as identified with the sinful race of man, He confessed sin with contrition and penitence. All that came on Him in the way of suffering besides this was superfluous and unnecessary, so far as His redemptory acting was concerned. But our Lord Himself and His apostles emphatically declare the very contrary of this. According to them, it was His giving His life a ransom for many, His laying down His life for the sheep, His bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, His being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, His redeeming us to God by His blood, His offering Himself as a sacrifice for us, His shedding His blood for us, that formed essential elements in His expiatory work whereby He obtained redemption for us. But of these Dr. Campbell's theory takes no account; they had no direct relation to the atonement which Christ made; they only served to show His abiding trust in God and determined submission to His will; so far as the atonement itself was concerned, they might have been dispensed with. Who can accept this as an adequate explanation of the New Testament statements respecting the work of Christ? Surely nothing can be more certain than that according to these the personal sufferings of our Lord, terminating in His death upon the cross, were essential and indispensable elements in that

work by which He made our peace with God and procured the remission of our sins.

d. From the consideration of Dr. Campbell's theory we may pass by an easy transition to consider that of Dr. Bushnell of America; for in many respects the two are identical. It is difficult, indeed, to ascertain precisely what Dr. Bushnell's view of the atonement is; for he has discussed the subject in two separate works which do not wholly agree with each other, and the perusal of which leaves on the mind the conviction that the author had not thoroughly excogitated the subject, but was rather feeling his way tentatively to some clear, consistent, and well-founded theory. It is certain, however, that he agrees with Dr. Campbell in regarding our Saviour as identified with humanity, and as, by His deep sympathy in penitence and suffering under the load of sin with mankind, making propitiation for the sinner. He agrees also with him in thinking that it is by the moral power alone of Christ's work and suffering that man is to be brought to God and saved. The peculiarity of Dr. Bushnell's theory lies in the view he presents of what it was in our Lord's sufferings that gave them their propitiatory efficacy. On this point he advances the strange notion that it was by putting Himself to pain and cost that God overcame His offended sentiment and alienated feeling towards man as a sinner, and so was able really to forgive his sin. He lays it down as a postulate that there can be no real forgiveness so long as the hurt feeling lingers in the mind of the injured party; and he argues that the way to get rid of this feeling and be in a condition heartily to forgive the offender, is to be at pains and cost to do the offender some benefit. "Let him," says he, speaking of a man who has been offended by his fellow-man, "find how to plough through the bosom of his adversary by his tenderly appreciative sympathy, how to appear as a brotherly nature at every gate of the mind, standing there as in cost, to look forgiveness without saying it, and he will find, however he may explain it or not explain it, that there is a wonderful consent in feeling somehow, and that he is perfectly atoned—at-oned—both with himself and his adversary."<sup>1</sup> Applying this by analogy to God, Dr. Bushnell contends that God could

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 42.

only by an act of self-sacrifice for man's benefit obtain from Himself hearty consent to be at one with the sinner, and grant him full forgiveness. He maintains also that forgiveness is obtained only when sin has been remitted; and he regards the remission of sin as being, not the cancelling of guilt or the pardoning of sin, but the removal of sin itself from the man; in other words, the renovation of his whole nature in righteousness and holiness, so that forgiveness, instead of being at the beginning of the believer's course, is not obtained until that course is completed, and is the consummation of his salvation. On this strange theory it may suffice to make but one or two remarks.

(a) It does not say very much for Dr. Bushnell's scholarship that he should explain the remission of sins as meaning the deliverance of the soul from the love and power of sin. The word *ἄφεσις* means the letting go of something that is held or bound, and is in this sense used in Luke iv. 18 in reference to the letting go of prisoners or captives. The phrase *ἄφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν* or *παραπτωμάτων* occurs thirteen times in the N. T., and in every case refers to the letting go of the sins which were held against the sinner, *i.e.* the removal of his guilt by forgiveness. In the English Authorized Version it is generally translated by forgiveness of sins.

(b) It is part of Dr. Bushnell's representation that the Greek word *δικαίωω*, usually rendered by *justify*, means to make righteous or morally good. But though the word occurs very frequently in the N. T., no instance can be produced in which it has certainly this meaning, whilst in every instance the judicial sense of declaring righteous, absolving from a charge or clearing from guilt, may be fitly understood, and in the majority of instances no other sense can be understood or supposed. Here, again, Dr. Bushnell's philology and exegesis are clearly at fault.

(c) A still more serious objection to his theory is that it wholly mistakes the nature of that which needed to be removed ere sin could be remitted and God and the sinner reconciled. According to him, sin is simply an offence against God, and its effect is to alienate God from the sinner and to produce in the divine mind a feeling of hurt and injury, which

has to be removed ere God will receive the sinner into favour. By man's sin God's "integrity is hurt, His holiness offended, His moral taste disgusted. He is alienated, thrown off, thrust back into separation by the whole instinct of his moral nature."<sup>1</sup> So Dr. Bushnell represents the case. But is this how the Bible represents it? Are we not taught there that sin is the transgression of law, that where there is no law sin is not, and that it is not because there is hurt feeling in the mind of God that He stands aloof from man, but, on the contrary, that it is because the broken law demands reparation and the public justice of God demands satisfaction ere the sinner can be received into favour, that God's love to man is hindered, as it were, from showing itself until such reparation has been made and such satisfaction rendered? The Bible does not represent God as *personally* at enmity with man; on the contrary, it represents Him as pitying the sinner, as loving the world, and as commending His love to men while yet sinners by providing such an atonement for sin as shall reconcile the showing of favour to the sinner with the claims of His government and law. The enmity of God to the sinner is purely *rectoral* and *judicial*. There is no wounded feeling in His mind that requires to be overcome and appeased ere He can sincerely pardon the offender. He is propense to mercy; He delighteth to be gracious; He is Love. And were it not so, one does not see how there could have been any provision for man's salvation at all. Apart from this, what was there to prompt the Almighty to seek the restoration to His favour of those who had insulted and offended Him? So long as the "hurt feeling" of which Dr. Bushnell speaks remained in the divine mind there could be no desire on the part of God to be at peace and amity with man. Either this feeling must die out of the mind of God, or the alienation and separation must continue for ever. But if this feeling was really in the mind of God it could not simply die out of its own accord, for God is not like us, liable to fluctuations of feeling or change of mental condition; the feeling would abide, and no step would be taken by God towards reconciliation with the race whose conduct had excited that feeling in Him. On Dr. Bushnell's hypothesis,

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 41.

then, instead of there being on the part of God the initiation of a movement towards reconciliation with the sinner, there could have been no such movement at all; the enmity must have continued for ever, and salvation been a boon for ever denied to man.

(d) It will be observed that Dr. Bushnell inverts the *ordo salutis* by making forgiveness consequent on the deliverance of the soul from the love and power of sin. He thus represents sanctification as preceding justification; according to him, the latter is obtained only when the former is complete. How opposed this is to the teaching of Scripture, and how utterly subversive of the whole scheme of divine truth as there revealed to us, I need not stop to point out. I may remark, however, in passing, that Dr. Bushnell's representation of the order of salvation remarkably coincides with that of the Romanist divines, and against which Evangelicals have from the first protested. According to the Romanist doctrine, justification is a progressive work, beginning in the remission of original sin by baptism and the implantation of a renewed nature, or the infusion of grace, into the soul, and proceeding as the man advances in holiness, sin being remitted as it is renounced and removed, and ending in the final remission of guilt when the man is wholly sanctified, this being the completion of justification. In like manner, Dr. Bushnell teaches that it is as man is freed from sin that his sin is remitted, and only after the man is wholly purged from sin, that is, after his sanctification is complete, that he is pardoned and justified. Dr. Bushnell does not, it is true, homologate the Romanist doctrine, that by forsaking sin, becoming holy and doing good works, men acquire a *meritorious right* to justification; but in other respects his doctrine very much coincides with theirs. The Romanist doctrine, however, has one advantage over that of Dr. Bushnell, in that in it the *ordo salutis* is so far preserved that remission of sin, in the sense of pardon and cancelling of guilt, so far as that lies on man from his connection with Adam, is held as *preceding*, in the order of nature, the infusion of grace or the sanctification of the soul; whereas, according to Dr. Bushnell, salvation begins, not in pardon and legal acquittal, but in the turning of the man to God so as to be at one with Him, and so as to enter on a



course of progressive sanctification. And this leads me to another remark on Dr. Bushnell's theory, viz. that it takes no account of the moral impossibility of a man's being turned to God so as to be at one with Him, so long as he feels himself to be an unpardoned sinner and to have the load of guilt resting upon him. Dr. Bushnell emphatically asserts that the great end and design of Christ's work was to bring God and man to be at one. But how is this union to be effected so long as man's sin is unforgiven? Can God be at amity with a creature who lies under the ban and sentence of His law, whom that law has condemned, and over whom hangs the penalty which God Himself has denounced against sin? Is the actual removal of sin "possible (to use the words of Rothe) except on the supposition that God has previously entered into amicable relations with the sinner by the forgiveness of sin"?<sup>1</sup> Must not the first step, therefore, on the part of God towards reconciliation and amity be the delivering of the sinner from the doom he has incurred by his being pardoned and legally justified? And is not this also the first step by which man is to be inclined towards reconciliation with God? What is it that most estranges man from God? what was it that made Adam shrink from God and hide himself from His presence amid the trees of the garden? What is it that makes the name of God a name of terror and dislike to the sinner? Is it not the consciousness of guilt, the sense of condemnation, the conviction that the sentence of God lies upon him because of his sin? Until that be removed, man must ever stand aloof from God in enmity and dread, hating Him, and fearing nothing so much as the being brought into His presence. But how is this dire obstacle to man's reconciliation with God to be overcome, save by man's being assured that God stands ready to forgive him all his transgressions, to cancel all his guilt, and to receive him as pardoned and justified into His favour? Let this gospel be preached to men, and an effectual step will be taken towards drawing them to be at one with God. This gospel, however, Dr. Bushnell does not preach. He says to the sinner, "Come and be at one with God. See how good and excellent He is. See how He cares for you, how He pities

<sup>1</sup> *Der Erste Br. Johannis praktisch erklärt.*

you, how He loves you, now that the hurt feeling your sin produced has been removed from His mind. Come to Him, and be obedient, and follow after holiness and get rid of sin, and then, when all your sinfulness is gone, you will find all your guilt cancelled and forgiven." Such an appeal, it is to be feared, will be of little effect. Not until God's love to the sinner is exhibited in the offer to him of pardon and acceptance as a free gift on the ground of Christ's propitiatory and atoning work, will his heart be made contrite, his aversion to God overcome, his doubts of God's grace be dispelled, and his whole inner nature be captivated and drawn to God and to holiness.

(c) In fine, Dr. Bushnell by representing the influence exerted by Christ on man as operating *directly through ordinary channels*, in the same way as one man may operate morally upon another, virtually denies the necessity of a divine influence on the heart in regeneration and sanctification. That there is a great moral influence, arising from Christ's work on man's behalf, by which man is drawn to holiness and goodness, is most clearly taught in the N. T.; but it is also with equal clearness taught there that this influence is *supernatural*, that it is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that the new, the divine life is initiated and sustained in the soul, and that it is only as that divine Agent takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us that we are made to feel the constraining power of Christ's love or the attractive power of His cross. What were Dr. Bushnell's views of the agency of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of sinners I do not take it on myself to say; but the effect of his teaching in respect of the influence of Christ on the soul in promoting salvation seems to me to set aside, if not wholly to impeach, this doctrine of the N. T. as needless and superfluous.

There remain only two recent theories of the atonement that deserve any notice, and that chiefly because of the men by whom they have been advanced and advocated. The one of these is that of the late Frederick Denison Maurice, preacher at Lincoln's Inn,<sup>1</sup> and the other that of the late Frederick W. Robertson of Brighton.<sup>2</sup> After the remarks

<sup>1</sup> In his *Theological Essays*.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Sermons*, 1st series.

already made it will not be necessary to dwell at great length on either of these.

*c.* Mr. Maurice, though a great master of language, is by no means a perspicuous writer; at least, he often fails to convey to the reader a clear apprehension of his opinions,—probably because he had not always a very definite conception in his own mind of what he meant to teach. In regard to the work of Christ he seems to have held two views not, indeed, irreconcilable with each other, yet so diverse that they may be regarded as presenting that work under two totally different aspects, and suggesting two entirely different theories regarding it. One of these views is that which proceeds on the supposition of an identification of Christ with humanity, and is substantially the same as that which we have considered. On this, therefore, we need not delay. The other view is that the work of Christ was one great act of self-sacrifice on His part, performed and endured, not for the purpose of making expiation for man's sins, but simply "to illustrate the principle of self-sacrifice as due from all God's intelligent creatures to Him who made them, and as constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings."

(*a*) Now, it will be seen that this representation proceeds on the assumption that self-sacrifice is in itself, and apart from any end to be answered by it, a right thing, and what will be acceptable to God. But is this true? Is mere self-sacrifice of any moral worth? Is God pleased with mere self-inflicted suffering on the part of any of His creatures? If so, we must think of Him as the worshippers of Baal thought of their god, whom they sought to propitiate by cutting themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out (1 Kings xviii. 28); or as the ignorant Papist imagines, who thinks it a meritorious thing, and a thing with which God will be pleased, when he wastes himself with penance and mortifications, or lacerates his body with the scourge.

But it is not so. Self-sacrifice derives all its value from the end for which it is endured. If that end is good, and if in order to attain it I must mortify my own inclinations, give up my own ease, relinquish my own interests, and undergo

toil, privation, and suffering, then is such sacrifice of self required, and to render it would be for me a thing right and commendable. But if there be no good end in view to be attained by the sacrifice, then is such sacrifice a mere idle and profitless expenditure to which no obligation calls, and which, instead of being pleasing to God, will be condemned by Him, and if offered to Him will be repudiated by Him, saying, "Who hath required this at your hand?" (Isa. i. 12).

That the work of Christ was a great act of self-sacrifice no one can doubt; and that it was acceptable to God the Bible distinctly tells us. But was it so simply as sacrifice? Did it not derive all its worth and all its acceptability from its being the necessary means to a great and good end? And what was that end? The apostle tells us what it was in the same breath with which he announces that the sacrifice was acceptable to God. "Christ," says he, "hath loved us and given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). There it is: the offering of Christ went up to God as a sweet-smelling savour, not because it was a mere sacrifice of self, but because it was a sacrifice *for us*. It had a great end to answer; it was not a mere exhibition of patient endurance; it was a means to an end; and as that end was one which God desired, the sacrifice offered to attain it was pleasing and acceptable to Him. And in what respects Christ gave Himself for us He Himself tells us when He says, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). Here all is plain and consistent. Man was doomed to death because of sin; God desired the redemption of His creature from that doom; Christ gave His life as the ransom-price for man; and with this sacrifice God was well pleased because it secured the end which He desired. But, take away from Christ's work its vicarious and substitutionary character, and His sacrifice becomes a mere empty show, with which it is inconceivable that God, to whom all vain oblations are abominable, should be pleased.

(b) But, it may be said, Mr. Manrice does not represent the sacrifice of Christ as having no end in view to be secured by it; on the contrary, he holds that it had a good end in

view, viz. the "illustrating of the principle of self-sacrifice as due from all God's intelligent creatures, and as constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings." I understand by this that our Lord's work had for its end the showing to man what self-sacrifice really is, and so setting an example which man, if he would attain his true dignity and excellence, ought to follow. Now, on this it may suffice to remark—*a.* That on this view the work of Christ is resolved into the mere setting of an *example* to men which they are called to follow. Mr. Maurice's theory is therefore merely a modification of the Socinian view to which we have already adverted, and is exposed to the censure which that view must receive from all who accept in their proper meaning and import the statements of Scripture respecting the nature and design of our Lord's work. But *β.* this view is not only unscriptural, but it is absurd. For what does it suppose Christ's example to be designed to teach us? Apparently the duty of submitting to pain, suffering, and death in order to teach others to submit to the same! Christ, it is said, sacrificed Himself that He might give an example to men of self-sacrifice. This was the object or end of His sacrifice. This, therefore, must be the object or end of our self-sacrifice if we are to follow His example. To follow the example of Christ is to do as He did. But if He suffered merely to induce us to submit to suffering, then to do as He did we must submit to suffering in order to induce others also to submit to this. And thus we are brought to the conclusion that the grand design of the sufferings and work of our Lord was to originate an interminable series of sufferings and sacrifices on the part of men for no special end beyond the sustaining and extending of the series. This is surely absurd. One can understand the apostle, and perceive the force of his argument, when he says, "Hereby we have known love, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John iii. 16). Obviously, if Christ laid down His life for us as our ransom, and His example be binding on us, we are called, if need be, to ransom our brethren even at the expense of life. This is intelligible and reasonable. But if Christ's death had no such intention and effect, and was

merely to induce us to die that we may induce other men to die, and so on *ad infinitum*, a representation is given of this great event which is little short of ridiculous.

*f.* I pass on to consider the view advanced by Mr. Robertson of Brighton. Mr. Robertson was a distinguished preacher, and his published sermons, taken down from his lips, may be regarded as models of pulpit address, so far as construction, method, and style are concerned. The sentiment also is in general sound and scriptural, and many forcible and impressive enunciations of Christian truth, as well as enforcements of Christian duty, are to be found in them. But Mr. Robertson was an orator rather than a theologian, and his sermons give unmistakable indications that neither by habit of mind nor by training and study was he specially fitted to discuss theological questions. When he comes upon such his thinking is apt to be loose and incoherent, and his utterances perplexingly vague.

His theory of the atonement, so far as I can make it out, is somewhat this. In a world where evil predominates a good man will necessarily come into conflict with it, and in this conflict he must suffer, and only by suffering can he overcome the evil. Jesus Christ, as a partaker of humanity, came into this conflict when here on earth, and in this He suffered, and could not but suffer. "He came (says Mr. Robertson) into collision with the world's evil, and bore the penalty of that daring. He approached the whirling wheel, and was torn in pieces. Such is the law which governs the conflict with evil. It can be crushed only by suffering from it. The Son of Man, who puts His naked foot on the serpent's head, crushes it; but the fang goes into His heel." Now, in this conflict and suffering Christ may be said to have borne our sins in much the same way as the Jews of His day are said by Him to have borne the sins of their fathers, by allowing their deeds, and having the spirit which led to these. On this extraordinary theory, which I have endeavoured, as much as might be, to state in Mr. Robertson's own words, I make the following strictures:—

(a) It may be noted as an instance of Mr. Robertson's loose and incoherent way of thinking on such subjects, that whilst in one sentence he says our Lord was torn in pieces

by the whirling wheel of evil, in a sentence immediately following he says our Lord crushed the serpent's head. Both these cannot be true. If our Lord was torn to pieces by the whirling wheel of evil, then the serpent working in that wheel must have crushed Him; and if it was only the fang of the serpent that went into His heel, it is extravagant to speak of His being torn to pieces by the wheel of evil, which is only another name for the serpent's fang. This, however, is not a matter of much importance; it is worth noticing, however, as illustrating the habit of Mr. Robertson's mind, and the evil in discussions of this sort of allowing rhetoric to usurp the place of logic.

(b) Mr. Robertson represents the sufferings of our Lord as those which came on Him necessarily in His conflict with evil. There was therefore nothing extraordinary in these sufferings. They came on Him as they might come on any of us in conflict with the evil that is in the world. But is this how the Bible represents these sufferings? Are we not taught there that these sufferings were wholly peculiar and extraordinary? that they came on Christ not by any natural incidence, as suffering may come on a man who goes counter to any natural law, but were laid upon Him by God as a penalty He had to endure? and that instead of being the mere accidents of a good life in an evil world, they were purposely planned, appointed, and endured as the means towards a great end? All this Mr. Robertson overlooks or denies. He overlooks also the fact that the sufferings of Jesus Christ were voluntarily endured. They came upon Him, not because He could not avoid them, not because they were the inevitable consequences of His coming in contact with evil, but simply because He willed to suffer because He chose to drink the bitter cup that was put into His hand by the Father, and was obedient even to death in order that thereby He might achieve a result which could not otherwise be achieved. Nothing can be more certain than that had Christ willed not to suffer, all the powers of evil would have been impotent to touch Him. "Therefore," said He Himself, "doth the Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and

I have power to take it again" (John x. 17, 18). It is true in a sense His sufferings were necessary. It is true that it was not possible that the cup should pass from Him except He should drink it. But that was not because He might not have put it aside had He willed, but because His drinking it was necessary to the work He had undertaken to accomplish. To have refused the suffering would have been to desert the work and leave unattained the end for which He came into the world. This our Lord could not do, and therefore it became necessary for Him to suffer. But, save in this respect, His sufferings were not inevitable. To represent Him "the immaculate and divine Redeemer, as subject, like frail and fallen mortals, to an incapacity of overcoming the world's evil without Himself suffering from it," is indeed not only unwarranted, but extravagant and absurd.

(c) When Mr. Robertson asserts that "the law which governs the conflict with evil" is that "it can be crushed only by suffering from it," he lays down a position which neither reason nor experience will authenticate. In regard to physical evil every one knows that it is not by suffering from it, but by alleviating the suffering which it inflicts, that it is to be overcome. And it is the same in regard to moral evil. The apostle exhorts Christians to overcome evil by their good; and this is the grand panacea by which evil is to be cured, the weapon by which chiefly it is to be overcome. As a supply of good food will best allay the evil of hunger; as rest and genial slumber will more than anything else overcome the evil of fatigue; as wholesome diet, kindly nursing, even more than medicine, will meet and vanquish disease; as soothing unguents will most readily appease the pain of a wound,—so moral goodness, displayed in fitting acts, will prove the most effective and the most certain conqueror of moral evil. And if this be true in regard to us, whose good must ever be more or less imperfect, shall it be said that it could not have held in regard to Him whose goodness was absolute and all-commanding? But, even supposing that in respect of creatures such as we are, frail and fallen, it is a law that evil can be overcome only by suffering from it, can this law be held to bind Him, the Holy One of God, whose resources are infinite, whose power is Almighty, and



whose word could annihilate all being but His own? Surely had His mission been merely to overcome and subdue evil in the world, we may believe He could have accomplished this without suffering from it. But

(d) It is altogether a misconception of the end and purpose of our Lord's mission and work to represent this as the overcoming of evil. According to the express declarations of Scripture it was to take away sin, not to overcome evil, that He came into the world. These are not the same. Sin may be taken away, guilt may be cancelled, whilst moral evil remains. It is true that the *ultimate* effect of our Lord's work is the subjugation of evil and its entire removal from the soul of man; but this is not the primary and immediate effect of that work, nor was this what our Lord came into the world immediately to accomplish. He came to take away sin as guilt, to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, and thereby to open a way by which sin might be forgiven and a divine power be communicated to man by which he should be delivered from the power of evil and enabled wholly to overcome it. Not without this power is evil to be overcome; but this power is communicated only where sin has been forgiven and guilt cancelled. To represent our Lord's mission and work as having for their end properly and directly the overcoming of evil, is to confound His mission and work with the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. The just view and the correct statement is that Christ came to take away sin that the Holy Spirit might be given to renew, purify, and sanctify men's hearts, and so overcome evil and put it out of the world. "Christ," says the apostle, "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. iii. 13, 14). First, redemption through one who has suffered for us, then the gift of the Holy Spirit to sanctify and renew us. This is the proper order, and only by keeping this in view can we have a just conception of the design and effect of our Lord's mission and work.

(e) Once more: How, on Mr. Robertson's theory, can it be seen that the sufferings of Christ were conducive to our deliverance from evil? How come they to have any effect

in this direction? Here Mr. Robertson leaves us wholly in the dark. What he says on this point is to me simply unintelligible. The only meaning I can extract from his words is that Christ bare our sins, had our sin imputed to Him in the same way as the Jews of His day bare the sins of their fathers, that is, by imitating their example and being of the same spirit with them. "Separate acts of sin," he says, "are but manifestations of one great principle. It was thus that the Saviour looked on the sins of His day. The Jews of that age had had no hand in the murder of Abel or Zacharias, but they were of kindred spirit with the men who slew them. Condemning their sin they imitated their act. In that imitation they 'allowed the deeds of their fathers;' they shared in the guilt of the act which had been consummated, because they had the spirit that led to it." The obvious inference from such language is that Christ bare our sins by imitating our acts of sin, by allowing our sinful deeds, by being of the spirit which leads us to commit sin. But so horrible a conclusion could not be that which Mr. Robertson wished his hearers to draw; and indeed he goes on in the next paragraph to give a totally different representation of how it was that Christ bare our sins. "It is in this way only," he goes on to say, "that you will be able with any reality of feeling to enter into the truth that your sins nailed Him to the cross: that the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," etc. "In *this* way?" In what way? In the way in which the sins of the murderers of Abel and Zacharias were laid on the Jews of Christ's day? By no means, but in a way as nearly as possible the converse of this, viz. by our being of the same spirit as the Jews who despised, persecuted, and slew Christ, and imitating in spirit their deeds. "My sin and your sin," he exclaims, "the sin of all, bears the guilt of the Redeemer's sacrifice." So it comes to this: There was guilt in the sacrifice of Christ; that guilt was the guilt of the Jews who slew Him; and that guilt becomes ours when we are of the same spirit as they were, and act in effect as they acted. The Jews of our Lord's day bore the sins of their fathers by indulging their spirit and imitating their example, and we bear the guilt of the Jews who maltreated and crucified Christ when we

indulge their spirit and follow their example. And this, according to Mr. Robertson, is Christ's vicarious sacrifice—His suffering for our sins! Out of this imbroglio I confess I cannot see my way: *Davus sum, non Edipus*.

But suppose we take that part of Mr. Robertson's statement which is intelligible, though, as we have seen, not in accordance with truth and fact,—suppose we admit that the sufferings of our Lord were the necessary and inevitable result of His being brought in collision with the evil that is in the world, the question arises, How were these sufferings beneficial to us? In what way is the conflict which He endured conducive to our advantage? To this inquiry Mr. Robertson has no satisfactory answer to give; indeed, he gives no answer to it at all. Had he said, Christ suffered thus as a propitiation for our sins, he would have given an answer so satisfactory that it would have more than compensated for all the defects and errors of his general representation. But this he does not say; rather, this he denies and repudiates. Or had he said, Christ endured this conflict that He might vanquish Satan, and so utterly destroy sin that it should no longer be found among men, he would have advanced what was at least intelligible, however contrary to reason and Scripture. But this he does not say. From the general purport of his utterances we may infer that he regarded the sufferings of Christ as of advantage to us, as commending to us the love of God to man the sinner, and as also showing to us the evil and misery of sin. But here the question will again arise, *How* do the sufferings Christ endured manifest to us the love of God? To this those who hold the doctrine of a vicarious propitiation effected by Christ can give a ready and satisfactory answer, for they can say the giving up by God of His Son to suffering and death in order to atone for man's sins, is the greatest and most affecting proof of God's love that has been or that can be afforded to us. But where the propitiatory design and effect of Christ's sufferings are denied, this answer, of course, cannot be given. What answer, then, has Mr. Robertson, who denies this, to give? Absolutely none. "He makes no attempt," as Dr. Crawford has remarked, "to show how it comes to pass that this self-immolating conflict of the Lord Jesus should have *greatly contributed to our benefit*, as the

Scriptures emphatically declare it to have done above every other provision of divine love. . . . If," the same writer goes on to say, "His sufferings be not the appointed means by which pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace are obtained for such as put their trust in Him; if they be regarded only as the necessary result of His own personal contest with the evil agencies that were opposed to Him; if they have not so crushed the world's evil as in some effectual way to rescue or redeem us from it,—then I am unable to see any such inestimable good to men of all nations and of all ages arising from them as can justify the scriptural representations given of them, as of all tokens of divine love incomparably the most wonderful."<sup>1</sup>

The other idea, that the sufferings of Jesus Christ were endured for our benefit as illustrating the evil and misery of sin, and so tending to persuade us to forsake and renounce it, may be dismissed with very brief notice. For what is it that is presented to us in these sufferings? Not the case of a wicked man enduring the consequences of his iniquity or the misery attendant on sin, but that of a good man, a perfectly sinless and holy man, enduring unequalled calamity and suffering, not a little of which came upon Him *because* of His very goodness and holiness. This, unexplained by the fact that it was as the substitute of sinners, and bearing their sins in His own body, would naturally be held to show, not the evil and misery of sin, but the evil and misery of goodness, and so far from furnishing an inducement to men to forsake sin and follow after holiness, would rather tend to fortify them in iniquity, and make them shun goodness. Thus viewed, the effect on men of the contemplation of our Lord's sufferings would be anything but beneficial. Instead of stimulating and encouraging to a conflict with evil, it would have rather the opposite effect. "If," as Dr. Crawford says, "the immaculate Jesus—the only-begotten Son of God—must needs, when engaging in such a conflict, be subjected to humiliations the most abusing and sufferings the most excruciating, we have cause to fear that ordinary men may find in His example *quite as much to daunt and check as to encourage them*; and that they may so read the history of His afflictions

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement*, p. 341.

as to learn from it that their best policy is to refrain from all contact with 'the cockatrice by whose envenomed fang He was so sorely pierced,' and from all collision with 'the whirling wheel,' by approaching which too nearly He was torn in pieces." <sup>1</sup>

In taking a retrospective glance at the representations of the nature and effect of the work and sufferings of Christ which we have been considering, it cannot fail to occur to you that though I have spoken of these as theories of the atonement, they are not properly so designated. A theory (*θεωρία*) is a survey or conspectus of all the phenomena to be explained in their connection with each other, and their relation to some general fact, or truth, or principle under which they are comprehended. A theory of the atonement, therefore, must first of all present a full and accurate collection of all the utterances of Scripture on the subject, and from these, by a careful induction, the general proposition is to be educed which expresses the meaning and purport of these. To reverse this process and first to assume a general proposition, and then to seek support for it from Scripture, is to put forth a speculation, and not to offer a theory. And this is what all the writers whose opinions we have been considering have done. They offer their representation, not as what they have by a process of induction drawn from Scripture, but as a hypothesis which they have fallen upon, and which they think will suffice to explain the facts. By some of them no note is taken of what Scripture says on the subject at all, while others simply quote Scripture, and endeavour to show that it may be so interpreted as to support their views. In neither case is the course followed a right one. The atonement is a purely scriptural dogma. We know nothing on the subject except what we may learn from Scripture. To ignore Scripture, then, in our investigation is simply to lay aside the only light that can guide us, and to try to find our way in the dark; and first to form our hypothesis and then come to Scripture to find support for it, is nothing better than to try to gain credit to an invention of our own by making Scripture ancillary to it. In the former case we refuse the

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement*, p. 342.

only competent guide; in the latter, we are in danger of making the guide bend to our directions, so as to follow us where it ought to lead.

It is to be observed also that all these so-called theories proceed upon an entire misconception of one of the main facts of the case, the fact of sin. It was to take away sin that Jesus Christ came into the world and suffered; and we can consequently understand aright the design and nature of His work only as we rightly apprehend the nature and character of that which He came to take away. What, then, is sin? With these writers it is nothing more than moral evil, a thing morally odious, and which brings physical evil in its train. No wonder, then, that they do not see the need for an expiation ere sin can be taken away. It is possible to remove moral evil in many ways without this. It may be removed by sound doctrine, it may be removed by good example, it may be removed by earnest entreaty, it may be removed by touching and pathetic appeals. But it is not thus that Scripture represents sin. Whilst asserting its moral evil, it is primarily as *a transgression of law*, entailing guilt and condemnation on the transgressor, that Scripture represents it. It is not merely *κακία* and *ἀσέβεια*, it is primarily *ἀνομία* and *παράβασις τοῦ νόμου* (1 John iii. 4; Rom. ii. 23). Now, where this exists it can be taken away only by expiation. Law cannot remit its claims otherwise. Here, therefore, is the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of all these so-called theories; their authors stumble at the very threshold by misconceiving the foremost part of the case. Their first step being wrong, their whole course must of necessity be wrong, and their conclusion far from the truth.

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## CHAPTER XX.

## THE ATONEMENT.

*3. Principles upon which a Theory of the Sacrifice of Christ may be constructed.*

The survey we have taken of opinion on the subject of the atonement has brought before us three distinct classes of dogmatic conclusions as to the nature of this transaction. There is (1) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was of a legal or forensic character, intended to satisfy the demands of the divine justice, and thereby remove the legal obstacles which prevented man's reconciliation with God. There is (2) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was wholly of a moral character, intended to operate upon man rather than to affect the divine administration, and by removing man's hostility to God to effect his return to his Father in heaven in peace and holiness. And there is (3) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was wholly of a symbolical character, intended merely to shadow forth certain important religious truths or spiritual facts. Of these classes we may safely discard the last without any special examination, inasmuch as, instead of attempting to solve the problem, it simply evades it, and answers the question, What is the nature of the atonement? by virtually denying that there was any atonement at all. For it would only be an abuse of words to apply this term to a mere sacrament or symbol of religious truths. An atonement is a device or operation of some sort by which parties at variance are made one; but a symbol is merely a method of reminding us of truth already known; it announces nothing new, nothing unknown apart from it, and, consequently, can effect no result that might not have been effected without it. To call the work of Christ, then, a mere symbolical representation of religious truth, is to deny that it had any effect which might not have been produced by that truth itself forcibly presented. A symbol of truth can never do more than the truth of which it is a symbol could do; and, consequently, if the work of Christ was

merely a symbolical representation of religious truth previously known, it could have no more influence in reconciling God and man than that truth had had. It was only a new lesson of the old truth, more impressive, perhaps, than former lessons, but not in kind differing from them. It is obvious that a theory of this sort, instead of affording any explanation of the atonement of Christ, simply explains it away—sublimates it into empty vapour, leaving not even a *caput mortuum* behind.

Discounting this class of conclusions, we have to consider the two former. As to the first, we have seen that it is resolvable into two distinct and really different theories, according as the satisfaction rendered by Christ is regarded as demanded by the inherent justice of God, or as demanded by the administrative justice of God; in other words, according as the atonement of Christ is viewed as a paying to God of man's debt incurred by sin, or as a penal example endured for man's behoof, that on the ground of it sin might be forgiven without any harm accruing thence to the divine government. We have thus had in reality three theories of atonement to consider, which may be thus designated: (1) The simple satisfaction theory; (2) the rectoral or governmental theory; and (3) the purely moral theory.

Now, I am unwilling to believe that our choice lies necessarily *between* these three—that if we take the one we must reject the others, for I cannot help regarding each as incomplete, if not liable to serious objections, by itself, and that the whole truth will be found in a judicious combination of them all. Such a combination we should, I think, attempt to make in offering a theory of the atonement; and having examined, as far as time would admit, some of the leading theories in each of these schools, and showed wherein they seemed to me partial or erroneous, I would now place before you a succinct exposition of the principles on which, as it appears to me, a theory of the atonement may be formed.

This I shall do by enunciating and briefly illustrating a series of propositions.

(1.) God, as the Moral Governor of the universe, must always act in a manner perfectly consistent with Himself and with that government which is but an expression of Himself. This follows, as a necessary consequence, from the perfection



of God. As the infinitely wise, holy, and true God, He can find the only worthy end of His acting in Himself, and in pursuing that end He can never act otherwise than in harmony with Himself. Hence the Scriptures ascribe to Him perfect righteousness and holiness, by which we are not to understand equity and moral purity so much as the perfect propriety, so to speak, of all God's manifestations of Himself to His creatures—the entire consistency of all that He says and does with His own perfect and ineffable nature.

(2.) God having denounced sin as utterly abhorrent to His nature and as a transgression of His law, must ever act so as to preserve intact His consistency in this particular, *i.e.* so as to manifest His own abhorrence of sin, and to uphold the stability and honour of His government, under which it is forbidden. He must ever appear as hating sin, as seeking to deter His intelligent creatures from committing it, and as maintaining with inflexible rigour the prescriptions and the sanctions of His law directed against it. Hence He must not only denounce it, but punish those who commit it, and so place Himself in a position of hostility in relation to such. We find, accordingly, in Scripture that He is continually represented as standing in this relation to sinners of the human race (Rom. i. 18; Eph. v. 6; Ps. vii. 11; Ezra viii. 22; 1's. lxxv. 8, ix. 17; Matt. x. 28). Such plain and repeated statements of Scripture it is in vain to attempt to explain away. It may, indeed, be conceded to reason that when "anger" and "wrath" are imputed to the Almighty, we are not to take the words in their *literal* meaning, as if God could be subject to the passions which are in us designated by these words; but if from this it be argued that they mean nothing at all as applied to God beyond indicating that sin is contrary to Him, we must protest against the conclusion as alike opposed to sound hermeneutics and to the analogy of Scripture. The only safe way of expounding these and similar anthropopathisms is by analogy; and the analogy here plainly is, that as wrath and anger on the part of man lead to the inflicting of suffering on those who are the objects of these passions, so God, as the enemy of sin, will certainly inflict punishment on those who are guilty of it,—a sentiment which is strictly in accordance with the whole

tenor of Scripture concerning the bearing of present transgression on future suffering. We may add that this is also in full accordance with the teaching of natural reason on the subject of retribution. The conscience of every man teaches him that the sin he commits now will appear against him another day, and bring upon him the penalty denounced by the divine law against all who transgress it. Indeed, if it were not so, why should conscience be felt to impose upon us an *imperative obligation*? and why should we feel that conscience betrays its trust and fails to fulfil its office when it does otherwise than rebuke us for sin and warn us of retribution? The affirmation of this rests on the belief in a Just and Holy Ruler, to whom sin is odious, and who will reckon with the sinner; and the force with which the affirmation comes home to every man's bosom is proof sufficient of the accordance of natural reason with Scripture on this important point. Nor is the voice of history silent here. Rather does it in loud and thrilling tones proclaim the presence and continual presidency of a righteous and sin-hating Ruler in the universe. Among the many lessons which history teaches, none is uttered with greater force than this, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. xxxii. 23). Universal experience assures us that moral evil always brings with it its own punishment sooner or later, in one form or another. An ever-watchful Nemesis dogs the steps of the successful criminal, and at length vindicates by his punishment the law he has broken. Whatever pleasures may accompany the commission of evil, whatever advantages may for a season appear to accrue from it, and however long the transgressor may seem to enjoy impunity, the Avenger is sure to come at last, and then, like the end of the drunkard, the pleasant or profitable sin "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. xxiii. 32).

(3.) Whilst God is thus under an obligation arising from the perfection of His own nature to denounce sin, and, as a Ruler, to pronounce sentence of punishment on those who by sin have incurred the penalty attached to the prohibition of it, He is no less under obligation from the perfection of His nature to pity and compassionate the sinner. For God is not only pure and true, He is also and not less merciful and

loving; and having created man for Himself, and for reasons entirely in Himself, He can never cease to regard with interest and affection the being He has thus spontaneously formed. That it is so, the page of natural, no less than the page of written, revelation bears ample witness. While the Scripture proclaims Him to be the "Lord God, merciful and gracious," who, though "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin," yet "willeth not the death of him that dieth, but that he should turn from his wickedness and live;" the voice of nature no less explicitly attests His benevolence and beneficence to the children of men. He has never at any time left Himself without a witness in this respect; doing good unto all men; giving them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; filling their hearts with food and gladness. The entire world is full of His goodness; "air, earth, and sea teem with life," and life to most creatures is but joy. Whilst, therefore, conscience, acting on the assumption that God is just, threatens the sinner with punishment, the aspect of God's unwearied goodness awakens hope that in some way mercy may yet reach him so as to deliver him from the penalty to which his sins have exposed him. The very fact that God by His providence preserves the race of men in spite of themselves (for the tendency of sin is to enfeeble, diminish, and ultimately to destroy the race), and continues to bestow blessing upon them, notwithstanding continual rebellion against Him, is of itself sufficient to suggest the probability and beget the hope that in some way God will appear for the restoration of mankind, such as shall be in harmony with the perfection of His character and the glory of His administration. "Mankind," says Dr. McCosh, "seems to be a race fallen but not a race abandoned,—a race which cannot rise of itself, but a race which seems to be kept with care because it is yet to rise." In illustration of this, he refers to the appearance of Judea as a land over which the divine judgments have passed, but which, at the same time, appears as if it were just waiting for the promised renovation. "Does it not look," he continues, "as if, after the same way, there were among the ruins of our nature some materials which God is keeping with care that He may rear a new fabric?"<sup>1</sup> Man, in point of fact, has

<sup>1</sup> *Method of Divine Government*, p. 487.

always cherished such a hope. If he looks back with regret to a golden age that has long since passed away, he consoles himself with the prospect, more or less definite, of a grand restoration of the race to be achieved by some divine interposition on its behalf. The sentiments to which Virgil has given such striking utterance in his *Pollio*,<sup>1</sup> find their counterpart in the legends of the Persians concerning the destruction of Ahriman by Ormuzd, and the consequent bestowal upon the earth of all the blessings of peace, plenty, and unity; in the legend of the *Zendaresta* concerning the restoration of the reign of righteousness and true godliness in the last days; in the Egyptian belief in the victory of Osiris over Typhon;<sup>2</sup> and even in the northern legends concerning that new earth, "most lovely and verdant," which, after the battle of the gods, shall arise out of the sea, and on whose "pleasant fields the grain shall grow unsown."<sup>3</sup> These beliefs may probably be traceable to some primitive tradition as their source; but they could hardly have survived had not the experience of the race fallen in with the anticipations they embody.

(4.) These anticipations, however, can never acquire any firmness or precision, or rest on any solid basis of conviction anterior to actual experience of what God will do for man's recovery. Man, preserved amidst conscious unworthiness and experienced degradation, may have a hope that *some* way will be employed by God for his final recovery; but, previous to experience, he can never discover in *what* way this shall be done. Butler has remarked that though we may, from a knowledge of the character of God, arrive at a conclusion as to the ends which God will secure, "we are not competent judges what is the proper way of acting in order the most effectually to accomplish these ends."<sup>4</sup> This remark may be applied to the case before us: we may conclude, with considerable confidence, that God will interpose for man's deliverance, and we may be sure that if He does, it will be in a manner honourable to Himself; but we can go but a very little way

<sup>1</sup> Eclogue iv.

<sup>2</sup> See Tholuck's *Guido and Julius*, Appendix 4.

<sup>3</sup> See *Prose Edda*, ch. liii., in Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 457, Bohn's edit.

<sup>4</sup> *Analogy*, Pt. I. c. vii.

in determining the grounds upon which He must proceed in this, and we are utterly in the dark as to the method by which, upon these grounds, He shall accomplish the end designed. In fact, the two aspects of the divine character at which we have glanced, when viewed in their relation to man as a sinner, land us in what (to use the language of Kant) is called an antinomy of reason, similar to that which emerges when we contemplate the liberty of man as a free agent in connection with his subjection to the law of causation, or human responsibility in connection with divine ordination. In cases of this sort we have no contradiction, but only a law over against a law, both of which may be true, and neither of which excludes the other. In a contradiction we have two propositions which mutually destroy each other, and one of which must therefore be false; in an antinomy we have two propositions, both of which can be shown to be true, and which, though we cannot see *how* they are to be reconciled, yet do not so destroy each other as to oblige us to conclude that they never can be reconciled. In short, in the one case our reason tells us that they are irreconcilable; in the other case we simply acknowledge that our reason does not enable us to see how they are to be reconciled. Now, such an antinomy of reason emerges in the case before us. Both aspects of the divine character can be proved to be true, and neither of them contradicts the other. If we see reason to believe that God is under obligation to punish sin, we are not thereby constrained to deny that He is also under obligation to compassionate the sinner and seek his deliverance from the penalty he has incurred.

Impatience of this antinomy has led men to cast out of view one or other of the propositions of which it consists, and by this means to arrive at a solution of the problem which has served for the time to satisfy their minds. But such an expedient is neither reverent nor wise; for whatever pronounces on God's doings from a wilfully partial view of His character is insulting to Him, and we had much better remain with a problem unsolved than resort to means which solve it only in appearance, and thereby leave us with a deception.

(5.) Though it may not be competent for us to determine the way in which the exercise of the divine mercy to man is to be reconciled with the divine abhorrence of sin and God's

rectoral obligation to uphold the penal sanctions of His own law, and the stability of His government as involved therein, it is yet possible for us to fix on certain conditions without which such a reconciliation cannot be affected. *a.* We can, for instance, lay it down as certain in whatever way the divine mercy may find access to us so as to exempt us from the condemning sentence of the law which we have broken, it must be in such a way as shall preserve entire and untarnished the honour and authority of that law, and maintain the character of God as a holy and sin-hating Being. Natural reason and universal experience agree to assure us that if mercy be exercised towards a transgressor so as to diminish the authority of law, a greater injury is done to the interests of the community than was inflicted by the transgression itself, or than could be inflicted by the severest penalties endured by the transgressor. This holds true in reference to the divine no less than in reference to human governments. In whatever way, then, provision may be made for the remission of transgression, it must be by means of some arrangement which shall preserve intact the authority of God's law and the glory of God Himself as the author and administrator of that law.

*b.* Having arrived at this conviction, it will naturally occur to the inquirer, as a second condition of safe interposition for the deliverance of the sinner, that some adequate compensation shall be made on behalf of the sinner, such as shall uphold the authority of law, and shall show that God in forgiving sin is not indifferent to its evil, or regardless of the honour of that law of which it is a breach. It must be manifest that, as the object of punishment is simply the upholding of the authority of law, and thereby deterring from a repetition of the offence without which anarchy would ensue, if this end can be attained by an adequate compensation being offered for the offence, the way is opened for the safe and honourable exercise of mercy towards the offender.<sup>1</sup> In human affairs it may sometimes happen that the means are preferred to the end; but under the wise and perfect government of God no such mistake can

<sup>1</sup> See the admirable enunciation of the true theory of punishment by Plato in his *Protagoras*, p. 324.

happen ; there the end must ever be held to be of primary importance, and if that end be secured by means not in themselves dishonourable or wrong, all is done that is requisite.

Here I will take the opportunity of remarking that, in my judgment, the question of the atonement, as a question in theology, has been somewhat involved in obscurity and needless complication by being treated as if it were a question properly of *Justice* or *Equity*. When one clearly apprehends the idea of justice, it must be felt that with it *atonement* can have nothing to do. Justice means simply the allotting to each one his *jus* or *right* according to law ; in other words, giving to every one his *due*. This either has respect to the giving to a man of what is justly his own, such as the payment of a debt to a rightful creditor, or the allotment to an individual of property to which he is entitled ; or it has respect to the bestowal on each of the praise or the punishment which the law under which he lives decrees to be deserved by him. Under the former aspect justice is commutative ; under the latter it is forensic or distributive. Now, under neither of these aspects can justice contemplate or recognise atonement. Forensic justice has respect to a judge, and a judge as such can neither forgive transgression nor mitigate the penalty thereby incurred without violating the requirements of his office. Commutative justice has respect to the giving to a man of his own, and takes no cognizance whatever of such matters as transgression and remission. The remission of something duly incurred belongs to the department of government, not to that of equity. It is a question not of right but of prudence and propriety that arises when it is proposed to show mercy to the guilty. When, then, we speak of the remission of sins by God, it will tend to clearness and accuracy if we abstract from the notion of justice altogether, and instead of regarding God as a Judge regard Him as a Sovereign with whom is the prerogative of mercy,—a prerogative He is free to use subject to only one condition, viz. that it be so used as not to dishonour Himself or weaken the authority of His own law. The question is not, How can God be just while pardoning the guilty ? but, How can He pardon the guilty so as to act worthily

of Himself as the righteous Lord and Governor of the Universe ?<sup>1</sup>

(c) A third condition which will occur to the inquirer as necessary to the deliverance of a sinner from the penal consequences of his sin, is that if adequate compensation is to be rendered to the divine government for his transgression, that can be done only through the vicarious agency of another. Natural ethics and common sense can teach us that man as a sinner can of himself offer no adequate compensation to the law which he has broken. His mere penitence and grief for having transgressed can never compensate for his having done so; the law remains broken and dishonoured, let him deplore his breach of it as much as he can. Nor can any work of supererogation, *i.e.* merit beyond what God requires of him, compensate for former transgressions, because, as man can never go beyond what the law of God requires, any good he may do in the future can never make up for shortcoming and transgression in the past, seeing it is at the utmost only what he was bound to do. It is clear, then, if compensation is to be rendered to God's government for man's sin, that compensation must be rendered by another; in other words, the atonement must be a vicarious one. Nor does such an idea at all shock the natural reason of man; for in all ages and among all peoples the idea of vicarious suffering for sin so as to exhaust the penalty and procure remission has been recognized and acted on. The cases of Zaleucus, of Codrus, of Decius, might be cited from ancient history in support of this; and it is involved in the whole system of Gentile sacrifice as illustrated in former lectures.

An inquirer may thus arrive at an apprehension of the great principles upon which any scheme for man's redemption must be based; and having reached this conclusion, he would be prepared to receive on grounds of theoretical assent the doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of man.

<sup>1</sup> The word *δικαιος*, frequently translated "just" in our version, does not properly answer to the idea usually conveyed by that term. Derived from *δίκη*, which signifies "right," whether in the abstract or as established by law, *δικαιος* means either one who is absolutely righteous, or righteous according to law or usage. As applied to God "it signifies the perfect coincidence subsisting between His nature, which is the standard for all, and His acts." Cremer, *Bib. Theol.* Lex. p. 171, Eng. tr.



We may even presume that he would advance a step beyond this, and be able to determine with some degree of precision the necessary qualifications of one who should act as the propitiating mediator between God and man. He might, for instance, see that the substitute must be such as the supreme authority approves; that what is done by the substitute must be sufficient to show that the power which exercises mercy is not indifferent to the claims of law; that it must be of sufficient worth to command attention and render impossible the repetition of it; that there shall be an identity of nature between the substitute and those for whom he appears; that there shall be no force used to constrain the substitute to his propitiatory work, but that he shall be perfectly free, an unfettered and unconstrained voluntary agent; and that no permanent or irreparable injury should accrue to the substitute from what he does on behalf of those for whom he appears, as it would be manifestly unrighteous that in order to exempt the guilty from deserved punishment an irreparable evil should fall upon one who is himself innocent.

(6.) Now in the person and work of Jesus Christ, as made known to us in the Bible, we find all the conditions of a valid atonement fulfilled, and all the qualifications required in a sufficient Mediator combined, so that His work, intended to reconcile the exercise of mercy with righteousness, and to manifest that in receiving, and pardoning, and blessing sinners on the ground of that work God acts in harmony with Himself, effectually and fully answers that end.

It thus appears that the work of Christ answers both the great ends that require to be answered before man can be reconciled to God. By His obedience unto death He has made compensation to the law and government of God for our offences, so that it becomes consistent with the perfections of God as the righteous Lord and the Moral Governor of the universe to forgive sin; and He has brought to bear upon man a mighty moral power calculated to captivate and subdue man's inner being, and to bring Him to seek restoration to God, and at the same time to desire with all His soul to be conformed to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. Christ thus fulfils His great office as the Mediator

between God and man; as the Redeemer by whom man is recovered for God, and as the Reconciler by whom earth and heaven are brought again into one.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### 4. *The Moral Influence of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

Hitherto we have been engaged in considering the work of Christ in its relation to God and to divine government and law. We have seen how by His obedience unto death our Lord made satisfaction for man's sin, and thereby opened a way by which the mercy of God could flow forth upon man without any impeachment of the divine equity or any detriment to the divine administration. As the design of Christ's work, however, is to effect reconciliation between God and man, and as this cannot be brought about without man's being inclined to be at peace with God and without his being brought into harmony of mind and character with God, the work of Christ must have a certain effect in this direction also if its grand design is to be realized. It is necessary, therefore, that we should view the atonement of Christ in its relation to man as well as in its relation to God. We have seen its fitness to remove the legal obstacles that stood in the way of the righteous Lord showing mercy and kindness to the transgressors; we have now to inquire into its fitness to move man towards God and to bring him into harmony with God.

Now, it cannot have escaped the notice of any attentive reader of Scripture that the N. T. writers frequently and emphatically intimate a connection between the work of Christ and man's being brought to God as a renewed obedient and willing subject, and they at the same time intimate that Christ's work, culminating in His death, has a peculiar and special fitness to affect this result (1 Pet. iii. 18; Eph. ii. 13, 16; Col. i. 21; Gal. i. 4; Tit. ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24). By

statements like these we are clearly taught that the death of Christ upon the cross was designed to bring men from a state of enmity against God to a state of reconciliation and amity with Him, and to recover man from a condition of sinfulness and moral impurity to a condition of holiness and moral goodness. They also clearly intimate that the death of Christ possesses a fitness to effect this on men.

We are thus brought face to face to the question, Whence arises this fitness? What is there in the death of Christ that is fitted to draw men to God, to induce them to forsake sin, to follow after holiness, and to be zealous for good works? I can only offer a few hints by way of answer to these questions.

(1.) I observe that the work of Christ is fitted to exert a powerful moral influence upon men by its accordance with man's deepest moral convictions. Through it salvation becomes not a mere gracious and kindly act on the part of God towards man, but an act which is as righteous as it is gracious, as approvable to man's moral sense as it is gladdening to his heart. Were it not so it would be impossible to effect a real reconciliation of man to God on the basis of it. Man, conscious of sin, condemns himself; he feels that he deserves to suffer because he has transgressed a law which he *ought* to have obeyed, and that consequently were he to be forgiven while his guilt remained uncanceled a wrong would be done, and the moral order of the universe infringed. Even were it possible, then, for man to be pardoned without an atonement, it would be impossible to reconcile such forgiveness with the man's own sense of rectitude, or to convey to the man's own mind a sense of security and satisfaction in the pardon he had received. The laws of man's moral constitution forbid the possibility of his being really blessed or really at peace with God, unless his pardon and restoration to God be secured in such a way as his own conscience in its free action will approve. What satisfaction could a man have in pardon if he felt and knew that he ought not to have been pardoned? By what possibility could an intelligent being like man yield himself to a moral government and to the service of a moral system which he knew had in his own case been made to suffer wrong, and under which immorality such as his had been overlooked or

treated with indifference? Or by what process could veneration and adoring love towards God be sustained in a mind that could never forget how God had set aside the claims of His own law and treated with unbecoming leniency the impious rebellion against His government of His creatures? For man's own sake, then, and for the reality of His salvation, as well as for the honour of God and the stability of His law, was the work of Christ necessary ere sinners could be saved. By means of it salvation is brought to man on terms that meet the demands of his moral constitution, for by it it is made apparent that God is righteous to forgive sins as well as merciful and gracious. Man sees that mercy comes to him in the way of righteousness, and that he can obtain grace without any injury to law. His conscience thus approves what his desire of happiness prompts him to embrace. He sees how justice and judgment still surround and still support God's throne, while from beneath that throne mercy flows forth in a copious stream to gladden and to bless our sinful race. He is thus brought to be at peace with God on grounds which he sees to be real and enduring; and so with the consent of his whole higher nature, his intellect and his conscience, he is reconciled to God and restored to His service.

(2.) The work of Christ is fitted powerfully to influence man for good by the view which it gives of God,—a view fitted at once to impress and to attract, to fill with reverence and awe, while it inspires confidence and love. "Such a view of the Divine Being," says Dr. Wardlaw, "is presented in the cross as is precisely calculated to inspire and to maintain (to maintain, too, with a power which will increase in influence the more closely and seriously the view is contemplated) the two great principles of a holy life, the *love* of God and the *fear* of God; filial attachment, freedom, and confidence, combined with humble reverence and holy dread."<sup>1</sup> In connection with this God appears as "a just God and a Saviour," immaculate in holiness, inflexible in righteousness, unchanging in faithfulness, and at the same time full of compassion, delighting in mercy, and propense to bless. Such a view of God is fitted to impress powerfully the mind of the

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Soc. Cont.*, p. 236.

sinner, and to impress him in the way most calculated to bring him to God and bind him to God's service. A God only just and holy, the sinner shrinks from and regards with aversion and dread: a God simply benevolent and kind fails to inspire respect or to command obedience. It is only when we see God as too righteous to connive at any transgression of His law, as too holy to look without abhorrence on sin, and at the same time as too gracious and loving not to regard with compassion the sinner, and be ready to pardon and to bless the transgressor so soon as that can be done in accordance with the claims of right and the authority of law,—only then that the mind is rightly affected towards God, and we are brought at once to worship and to love God; to draw nigh to Him with the confidence of children, while at the same time we feel our infinite distance from Him, and stand in awe of His word. Such a view of God the doctrine of the cross supplies, and it alone; and by supplying this brings a mighty moral power to act upon man for his salvation.

(3.) The view which the work of Christ presents and presses on us of the love of Christ is calculated powerfully to affect the heart, and to lead to salvation. In the gospel Christ appears as out of pure love for man submitting to lay aside His divine glory for a season to become partaker of our nature, to bear our sins in His own body, to suffer and to die for us as a sacrifice for sins, that thereby atonement might be made for our transgressions, and we might be made partakers of eternal life and blessedness. Such love, as it is supreme in excellence and boundless in extent, cannot be contemplated by those who are the objects of it without touching man's deepest affections, and prompting him to yield himself wholly to Him by whom such love has been displayed. Love like this cannot but attract, cannot but subdue hostility, cannot but impel to devotedness and service. Men may shut their eyes to it, may refuse to receive the record of it, may treat that record as an idle tale or a devout imagination; but no man can regard it as real, and seriously contemplate it, without feeling more or less of that constraining power which the apostle says it had over him, and being led by it to live, not unto himself, but to Him by whom this love was showed.

Love like this draws out all the noblest affections of the heart, lays hold on the inward springs of action, brings under subjection to itself all man's active energies; and thus it causes the power of Christ to rest upon men, drawing them away from all iniquity, and impelling them to live supremely to Him who gave Himself for them, that He might "purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14).

(4.) The doctrine of the cross is fitted to exert a powerful moral influence on man by the view it gives of the evil of sin and the necessity of holiness.

The first step towards a real and permanent moral reformation is the acquiring a just sense of the evil of sin, and of the beauty, excellency, and desirableness of holiness. So long as men think of sin as a slight evil, so long as they count it, if not altogether venial, yet not deserving of severe condemnation and punishment, they will not be moved earnestly to desire deliverance from it, nor will they seek to be restored to any high degree of moral purity and holiness. It is when sin is made to appear exceeding sinful, when it is seen to be utterly abominable as well as pernicious, and when goodness, virtue, holiness are perceived to be not only what man ought to seek after, but what he must attain if the true dignity of his nature and his highest felicity are to be reached,—it is then that he begins with full purpose of heart to seek deliverance from sin, both in its guilt and in its power, and to follow after holiness. But where shall the evil of sin and the excellency of holiness be so strikingly exhibited as they are by the work of Christ? Where has God's abhorrence of sin been so strikingly manifested as in His demanding so costly a sacrifice ere sin could be forgiven? Where is the exceeding evil of sin so impressively and affectingly seen as in the sufferings of the Son of God, in His humiliation, His agony, His death as the propitiation for sins? Where shall we look for such a demonstration of the exceeding value of holiness as is furnished by the price which the Son of God paid in order to redeem men from iniquity and recover them to holiness? And what, therefore, is more fitted to inspire men with a hatred of sin, to awaken in them an earnest desire to be wholly delivered from it, and to impel them with all their

heart and soul to endeavour after moral goodness and holiness, than a realizing view of the work of Christ as the Saviour from sin?

"To walk without God in the world," says Mr. Thomas Erskine, "is to walk in sin; and sin is the way of danger. Men had been told this by their own consciences, and they had even partially and occasionally believed it; but still they walked on. Common arguments had failed; the manifestations of the divine character in creation and providence, and the testimony of conscience, had been disregarded. It thus seemed necessary that a stronger appeal should be made to their understanding and their feelings. The danger of sin must be more strikingly and unequivocally demonstrated; and the alarm excited by this demonstration must be connected with a more kindly and generous principle, which may bind their affections to that God from whom they have wandered. But how is this to be done? What more prevailing appeal can be made? Must the Almighty Warner demonstrate the evil of sin by undergoing its effects? Must He prove the danger of sin by exhibiting Himself as a sufferer under its consequences? Must He who knew no sin suffer as a sinner, that He might persuade men that sin is indeed an evil? It was even so. God became man and dwelt among us. He Himself encountered the terrors of guilt and bore its punishment, and called on His careless creatures to consider and understand the evil of sin by contemplating even its undeserved effects on a Being of perfect purity who was over all, God blessed for ever. Could they hope to sustain that weight which had crushed the Son of God? Could they rush into that guilt and that danger against which He had so pathetically warned them? Could they refuse their hearts and their obedience to Him who had proved Himself so worthy of their confidence?—especially when we consider that this great Benefactor is ever present, and sees the acceptance which this history of His compassion meets with in every breast, rejoicing in those whose spirits are purified by it, and still holding out the warning of His example to the most regardless."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion*, p. 65 ff., 4th edit.

The work of Christ is thus fitted to exert a great moral power drawing men unto God, attaching them to Him, binding them to His service, and constraining them to the pursuit of all goodness. Be it observed, however, that it derives this fitness and this power supremely, if not wholly, from its being a work of propitiation. Apart from this, there is no such manifestation of God's righteousness and majesty and purity, and no such exhibition of His love, or of the love of Christ to man, as is fitted to move and attract the sinner to God, and constrain him to obedience and virtue. It is only when, in connection with the atonement of Christ, God appears as the Just God and the Saviour, the Friend of sinners, yet sin's eternal foe, that He is presented to us so as to lay hold on man's whole moral nature, and bring him in the entireness of his being into true union with God and sincere devotedness to Him. "A pardon without a sacrifice" (to quote again from Mr. Erskine) "could have made but a weak and obscure appeal to the understanding or the heart. It could not have demonstrated the evil of sin, it could not have demonstrated the graciousness of God, and therefore it could not have led men either to hate sin or to love God."<sup>1</sup> Abstract the atonement from the work of Christ, and it becomes nothing more than an example of piety, sincerity, and fortitude, such as many of His followers have exhibited, but which has no power in itself to constrain any one to follow it.

This may suffice to show how vain must be the attempt to resolve the effect of Christ's work into the mere moral power of it over men's minds apart from its sacrificial character. All the moral theories, as they have been called, of the atonement fail in this, that not only do they take no just account of the actual facts of the case, and ignore or set aside the statements of Scripture upon the subject, but they evert the foundation on which alone they themselves could securely rest. Take, for instance, the theory of Abelard, who may be regarded as the first to propound a moral theory of the work of Christ, either as propounded by himself, or as set forth by any of his followers in recent times. According to Abelard, who does not, however, state his views very clearly, or always preserve

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks, etc.*, p. 72.



consistency in his statements, "we are justified and reconciled to God in the blood of Christ, because by this singular grace exhibited to us, in that His own Son assumed our nature and in Him, instructing us by word and by example, He persisted even unto death, He bound us by love to Himself, so that, inflamed by so great a benefit of divine grace, true love shall not fear to endure anything. . . . Our redemption, therefore, is that supreme love in us through His passion which not only frees us from the servitude of sin but procures for us the true liberty of the sons of God, so that we fulfil all things by love rather than by fear of Him who exhibited to us so great grace than which greater could not, as He Himself attests, be found."<sup>1</sup> Abælard thus "held it to be the free grace of God which, by kindling love in the breast of man, blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."<sup>2</sup> This view has lately found an expositor and advocate in Mr. Maurice, though he has mixed it up with a theory of his own regarding the identification of Christ with humanity, "who," he says, "bore in the truest and strictest sense the sins of the world, feeling them with that anguish which only a perfect and pure and holy being, who is also a perfectly sympathizing and gracious being, can feel the sins of others."<sup>3</sup> Now, in all this there is a great deal of truth. It is a precious truth that it was the love of God which prompted the mission of His Son into our world; and any theory which overlooks this, or would make the work of Christ appear as prompted by a mere desire on the part of God to vindicate His law and manifest His righteousness, must be regarded as defective and erroneous. It is true also that by sending His Son to procure our salvation, God has, as the apostle expressly testifies, "commended" His love unto us in the strongest possible way, and that the effect of this on the mind of him who realizes it is to draw him away from sin unto God. It is true, also, that our Lord having assumed our nature, did in that nature feel an unspeakable anguish from the bearing of our sins. But when this is offered as an adequate explanation of the atonement and sacrifice of Christ,

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Epist. ad Romanos*, lib. ii., Opp. p. 553, quoted by Hagenbach, ii. p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Baur, *Versöhnungslehre*, p. 195, quoted by Hagenbach, ii. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Theological Essays*, p. 141.

we must reject it as both contrary to Scripture and unreasonable in itself. It is contrary to Scripture, for in those passages which most clearly and emphatically assert that the work of Christ had its origin in the love of God, and that by it God's love is manifested and declared, it is to the expiatory and propitiatory effect of that work that our attention is directed as that by which this love has reached its object, and by which it has been displayed. "Herein," says the Apostle John, "is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10; see also Rom. v. 8). "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). Besides, as Scripture so plainly states that it was by giving Himself for us, by bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, by becoming a curse for us, by shedding His blood for the remission of sins, by putting away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, that Christ finished the work which God had given Him to do, and accomplished the work of our redemption, we must either shut our eyes to these declarations, or unfairly explain them away before we can regard the sufferings of Christ as meant to assure us of the love of God to us apart from their efficacy in procuring for us pardon and acceptance with Him. And as this theory fails when brought to the test of Scripture, it no less fails when tested by reason. For the fact being that the sufferings and death of Christ were not accidents that befell Him, but purposed and appointed parts of that by which He was to accomplish His work, the question arises, How could this work so manifest to man the love of God as to move man towards God? If we assume that these sufferings were necessary in order to make atonement for men's sins, it is easy to see how Christ, in voluntarily submitting to them, showed the greatness of His love to men, and how the greatness of God's love to men was manifested in His giving up His Son to such suffering in order that, atonement being made, man's sin might be forgiven and man restored to the divine favour. But abstract from this and view the sufferings of Christ as merely something that came upon Him in the course of His career, but had no special bearing on the attainment

of the end for which He came, and it becomes impossible to see how, in His life and work, there was any more a manifestation of divine love than is furnished by the life and work of any good, devoted, and suffering teacher or martyr to the truth. "Assuredly," as has been well said, "*His sufferings* cannot, in themselves considered, be held as illustrating the nature of that invisible God who is necessarily exempt from human sorrows and infirmities. And apart from their efficacy in securing the remission of sins, they tend to obscure, instead of heightening, any evidences of His Father's love which He has otherwise exhibited to us. For it might be not unnatural to conclude that the very circumstance of the most beneficent person who has ever appeared on earth being at the same time more than others a man of sorrows—afflicted not only with bodily sufferings the most severe, but with inward and spiritual agonies the most excruciating (and that, too, although, being perfectly immaculate, He neither deserved nor required chastening on His own account)—was an indication that the great God who thus visited Him was much more disposed to frown than to smile on all the sympathy and kindness He displayed towards us."<sup>1</sup>

Manifestly, therefore, it is only as we view the work of Christ as propitiatory, and intended to procure for man salvation by rendering satisfaction for his transgressions, that it can illustrate for us the true character of God, or attract us to Him by the manifestation of His love. We learn the greatness of God's love from what we see that He has done for us; and in the gift of His Son to die for us, and thereby to make atonement for us, we see the greatest manifestation of His love to man, and it is thence we learn most of all that God is love. "What greater cause," says Augustine, "had the advent of the Lord than that God should show His love in us, in that whilst we were yet enemies Christ died for us? But this to this end, that we should love one another; and as He gave His life for us, so we should lay down our life for the brethren; and if before it grieved us to love God, it should not grieve us now to return to love Him, since He has first loved us, and spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Doctrine of Holy Scripture respecting the Atonement*, p. 288.

For there is no greater invitation to love than to precede in loving."

### 5. *Summary of Inferences respecting the Atonement.*

We are now prepared, in conclusion, and by way of inference from the preceding train of remarks, to give a categorical answer to the three questions which at the outset we stated every theory of the atonement is required to answer.<sup>1</sup>

(1.) What is the *nature* of atonement? The reply to this is, That it is an expedient of divine contrivance for the purpose of reconciling man to God by, on the one hand, so compensating to the law and government of God for man's sin as to render it compatible with God's perfection to forgive the sinner and receive him into favour; and by, on the other hand, so appealing to man's moral and spiritual affections as to overcome his native and habitual enmity to God, and draw him in love, penitence, and submission to seek pardon and acceptance with God.

(2.) Whence arose the *necessity* for this atonement? The reply is, It arose partly from the perfection of the divine nature, and partly from the moral condition of man;—from the perfection of the divine nature, which rendered it impossible for God to forgive sin, except in such a way as should attest His continued abhorrence of sin and uphold the sanctions of His law, by which sin is denounced and forbidden; from the moral nature and condition of man, which render it impossible that he can be really reconciled to God except by means which appeal to his intelligence, touch his emotions, satisfy his conscience, and inspire him with love to God, whose love to man the provision made by Him for man's recovery has so conspicuously displayed.

(3.) For *whom* was the atonement made? or, For *whose benefit* was the propitiatory work of Christ intended? To this I would reply by distinguishing the question into two: *a.* For whose benefit is the atonement made by Christ *sufficient*? *b.* For whose benefit was the atonement of Christ *designed*? These questions demand different answers. To the former

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 85.

my reply would be : The atonement of Christ, being of infinite value, is adequate and sufficient for the benefit of all men, without exception. To the latter I would reply : The atonement of Christ was designed and intended to benefit those only who are, by means of it, actually saved and brought to God. It is a remedy of universal sufficiency, but of limited efficiency; and this limitation, as it is certainly actual, was also intentional and designed. The merit of Christ as the propitiation is boundless, but the actual reconciliation effected by Christ is not only partial, but was designed and purposed to be so. When I speak of benefit, I mean in this connection the special benefit of salvation. As there are collateral benefits to mankind from Christianity, even where it is not embraced, so there may have been benefits of an outward and temporal kind designed to be secured to the race by the work of Christ. But as respects the great and primary benefit, that of eternal salvation and reconciliation to God, the work of Christ was designed and intended only for the benefit of those whom the Father had given to Him. Of them and them only was He the substitute; for them and them only did He give Himself, that He might redeem them as His peculiar property, and obtain them as His purchased possession.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS.

##### ii. THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

Having considered the first part of Christ's sacerdotal acting, the offering of sacrifice or oblation, we come now to the second part—the making of intercession.

(i.) Under the ancient dispensation the priest, besides offering for the sins of the people, had to make intercession for them. For this purpose he, on the great day of atone-

ment, went within the vail and appeared with the blood of the sacrifice before the mercy-seat, the *capporeth* or covering of the ark of the covenant, over which was the Shekinah, or visible manifestation of the divine presence. He appeared there as presenting unto God the sacrifice which had been offered. The slaying of the victim was the sacrifice, but this had to be presented to God and accepted by Him before the act could have any validity. The blood of the victim was shed, and this it is declared was given to them upon the altar to be an atonement for their souls (Lev. xvii. 11). As the blood was the life, so it was shed that life might be given for life. In this consisted properly the atonement. But this atonement had to be presented and formally accepted by God before it could be of any avail for the pardon of transgression, before it could be really effectual for the souls, *i.e.* the life of the offerers. In order to this, therefore, the high priest, after he had slain the victim, carried the blood within the vail and presented it before God. By this he made intercession for the people. Whether he used any words, whether he made prayer to God for the people, we do not know. The probability is that he did not. The mere presentation of the blood would be sufficient. We know that there may be intercession without words. It is recorded of one of old that when accused before the judges, and about to be condemned, his brother, who had been maimed in fighting his country's battles, effectually interceded for him by simply exhibiting before the judges his wounded limb.<sup>1</sup> So, as has been well said, "If a general who had fought the battles of his country, and had received many a wound, were presenting a petition to his sovereign on behalf of any of his offending subjects, what could be more effective intercession than the silent baring of his bosom and pointing to his scars?"<sup>2</sup> We know that we ourselves may plead with others without words—that we may plead with God "with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). The high priest, therefore, may have accomplished his act of intercession by simply appearing in the presence of the Shekinah, and in awed silence presenting the sacrificial

<sup>1</sup> *Ælian, Varia Historia.*

<sup>2</sup> Wardlaw, *Systematic Theology*, ii. 633.

blood; and this was probably the case. At the same time, that prayer was *virtually* offered by him was symbolized by his having to "take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail;" and this incense he was to burn "before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony" (Lev. xvi. 12, 13). The burning incense, diffusing around its fragrant vapour, was the accredited symbol of prayer, as we learn from several passages of Scripture (Ps. cxli. 2; Rev. v. 8, viii. 4).<sup>1</sup> This being the meaning of the burning of incense, we find it was customary for the priest to burn it before the Lord; and whilst he did so the multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense (Luke i. 9, 10). This was done continually morning and evening, when the people went up to the temple to pray; but on the great day of atonement, when the most solemn representation was made of the sacrificial act, the entrance of the high priest within the vail was accompanied with the burning of incense to symbolize his intercession for the people with God on the ground of the oblation which he offered.

(ii.) Now, as intercession formed so important a part of the functions of the high priest of old, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the true High Priest of His Church, is also represented as making intercession in heaven for His people. As the high priest of old entered with sacrificial blood into the most holy place and appeared there for the congregation of Israel, so the Lord Jesus Christ, having offered Himself on the cross as a sacrifice for sins, hath entered into heaven with His own blood, and there appeareth in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix. 24). He there continues His priestly office, making intercession for His people, "a minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."

1. The fact of our Lord's intercession is made known to

<sup>1</sup> Comp. also the numerous passages in the O. T. where the burning of incense is the synonym of offering worship and making prayer, such as 1 Kings xi. 8; 2 Kings xx. 17, xxiii. 5; Jer. i. 16, vii. 9; Hos. xi. 2, etc. Comp. also the Latin *thura rogare*, for *per thura precari*, and the use of *thura* for *verba precantia*.

us by various statements of Scripture. As by the prophet of old the Messiah was described as bearing the sin of many and making intercession for the transgressors (Isa. liii. 12), so in the N. T. Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in His own body on the tree, is represented as making intercession for men in heaven. This is expressed in various forms of phraseology. In Rom. viii. 34 the apostle says, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The word here used by the apostle is *ἐντυγχάνει*, and the same word is used in Heb. vii. 25. This verb means primarily to light upon anything, to fall in with, or to meet any one; hence to approach one for the sake of conference, to make application for anything (as in Acts xxv. 24, where Festus says to King Agrippa, "The multitude of the Jews *ἐνέτυχόν μοι*, have applied to me," or, as in the A. V., "have dealt with me"); hence to entreat or make prayer, either for the obtaining of benefit or the averting of calamity. As used in the passages cited, it implies that the Lord Jesus Christ as the great High Priest of His Church approaches to God and makes request for the salvation of His people and their deliverance from condemnation. As in His intercessory prayer when on earth He said, "I pray for them which Thou hast given me," so in some sense still in heaven He prays for those who are His own.

To the same effect is the representation in Heb. ix. 24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," literally, "to appear to the face, or before the face, of God on our behalf" (*ἐμφανισθῆναι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*). The Lord hath gone into heaven, and there appears before God as concerned for the welfare of His people, and to plead with God on their behalf. It is not, therefore, in any secret or invisible way that He obtains blessings for His people, but in open, apparent, official acting on their behalf as their great High Priest in the heavenly temple.

It is in accordance with this that our Lord is said to be our Paraclete with the Father: "If any man sin," says St. John, "we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the



righteous" (1 John ii. 1). In the A. V. the word "advocate" is used as the rendering of *παράκλητος*; and in John xiv. 16, xv. 26, xvi. 7, where the same word is used, it is rendered "Comforter." But neither of these words conveys exactly the meaning of the original word. That word primarily means one who is called to stand beside a person and render him help, and it is in the wide sense of a *helper* that it seems to be used both of Jesus Christ, and by Him of the Holy Ghost. As guilty sinners, we need the help of Christ to avert from us the righteous displeasure of Him against whom we have sinned; as those who are destitute and unworthy, we need His help to procure for us blessing; as those ignorant and prone to erre, we need a helper to instruct and guide us; as liable to trouble and sorrow and affliction, we need a helper to comfort and cheer us; in short, as those who are in a condition of weakness, imperfection, and sin, we need one to come to us and stand by us, and undertake our ease, and procure for us what we need so as to be safe and happy; and this Christ is to His people in Himself and through His Holy Spirit. It is on this account that He calls Himself, and is called by His apostle, our Paraclete. Whilst on earth He was the Paraclete—the helper, the teacher, the guide, the comforter of His disciples; and hence He speaks of the Holy Ghost as *another* Paraclete whom He should send, thereby implying that He Himself had been a Paraclete to them; and now that He is ascended to heaven and is with the Father, He is still the Paraclete of His people, their Helper in every time of need. As it is in connection with sin that the apostle in 1 John ii. 1 calls Christ the Paraclete of His people, we must understand this as having reference to His agency in procuring for them that deliverance from sin which shall enable them as the sons of God to live without sin and to rejoice in a full forgiveness. And this help our Lord brings to them by acting as their intercessor with the Father.

2. These passages leave us in no doubt as to the *fact* that in some sense our Lord intercedes with God the Father for men. But when we come to ask in *what* sense this is to be understood, in other words, to inquire into the *nature* of Christ's intercession, we find that there is very little to be

said. Of one thing we may be certain, that the intercession of Christ in heaven is not of the nature of a pleading with or entreating of God on behalf of the saints. If our Lord offers prayer to God for His people, we may be sure that it is very different from such prayer as we have to offer, or even from such prayer as our Lord Himself offered while on earth. The prayer, indeed, which He offered to the Father before He was betrayed, and which is recorded in John xvii., may be regarded as affording a view in the general of Christ's intercession for His people; but in the manner and form of it we cannot regard it as illustrating the method of His intercession now that He is in His kingly glory at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. We do not need to suppose that He uses words at all. As we have seen, there may be intercession without words; and it seems more in accordance with the dignity of our Lord's position as exalted Mediator that we should regard His intercession for His people as substantially the constant presentation of Himself before God as their High Priest, by whose sacrifice atonement has been made for their sins, and on the ground of whose merits blessing may be bestowed upon them though unworthy. Calvin<sup>1</sup> has in a few words set forth all that can be said with safety on this subject. "Let us not dream," he says, "that He [Christ], prostrate at the Father's knees, prays as a suppliant for us, but let us with the apostle understand that He so appears before the face of God that the virtue of His death avails for a perpetual intercession for us; and that He, having entered the heavenly sanctuary alone, presents the vows of His people who stand afar off in the outer court." So also John Owen says, "Now, in heaven, the state and condition of Christ admitting of no oral or formal applications, and the ground, reason, and argument of His intercession being finished and past, His intercession as the means of the actual impetration of grace and glory consists in the real presentation of His offering and sacrifice for the procuring of the actual communication of the fruits thereof unto them for whom He so offered Himself. The whole matter of words, prayers, and supplications, yea of internal conceptions of the mind formed into prayer, is but accidental unto intercession,

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, lib. iii. cap. 20, § 20.

attending the state and condition of Him that intercedes. The real entire nature of it consists in the presentation of such things as may prevail in the way of motive or procuring cause with respect unto the things interceded for. And such we do affirm the intercession of Christ as our High Priest in heaven to be."<sup>1</sup> We must beware, however, of going the length to which some have gone, of affirming that there is nothing in the nature of *asking* in our Lord's intercession. In some sense, though we do not say how, there must be in His intercession, to make it intercession at all, "a putting up," as Owen expresses it, "a requesting and offering unto God of His desires and will for the Church, attended with care, love, and compassion."<sup>2</sup> But whilst we avoid this extreme, we must equally, if not with greater earnestness, avoid the opposite extreme into which some have been betrayed, that of too curiously and minutely specifying the characteristics of our Lord's intercession. In this respect the divines of the Lutheran Church have chiefly erred; for they insist that "the intercession of Christ is not only real, but also vocal and oral." With this, however, all the Lutheran divines are not chargeable. Brentius, for instance, says, "Whether that intercession be verbal, and consist in words and prayers made either by the mind alone or also by the voice, or whether it be real only, and consist in this, that Christ by force of His merit and satisfaction formerly rendered, and prayers long ago made, moves God to remit our sins, it is not needful to define." This is true; surely it is enough for us to know that Christ does intercede for His people, that His intercession is carried on by Him in heaven, that it is a continual intercession, that it is effectual, so that through it all the benefits of Christ's mediation are secured to believers, and that this efficacy depends on that oblation which Christ offered when "He gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). This intercession Christ as God-man ever lives to make. It is the main end of His mediatorial reign. It is that by which He secures the final salvation of His people. Hence, says

<sup>1</sup> Works, xix. p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Owen, *Exposition of the Hebrews*, vol. v. p. 541; Works, xxii., Goold's edition.

the apostle, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. v. 10). His sacrificial death laid the basis of our reconciliation in which salvation has its commencement. His life, devoted to making intercession for us, secures that that salvation shall reach its consummation. Because He thus liveth to make intercession for us, "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him" (Heb. vii. 25).

3. A question has been raised whether in any sense Christ can be said to make intercession for those who are not His people by faith in Him. That He intercedes for believers is admitted, but are they alone the objects of His intercession? By the Lutheran divines the answer given to this question is that whilst Christ in a special manner intercedes for those who are His own, He also intercedes for all men to the effect that they are not destroyed, and have the gate of divine mercy still open to them.<sup>1</sup> For this there does not appear to be any real authority in Scripture. It is indeed true that it is in virtue of Christ's sacrifice and atonement that the race of sinners is preserved on the earth, that men are surrounded with divine bounties, that the gospel is preached to men freely, and that the offer of salvation is open to all. But that Christ in any sense intercedes for those who do not accept His salvation, is neither taught in Scripture nor is it compatible with the conditions of His intercession. It is as a Priest that He intercedes, and, consequently, it can only be for those who accept Him as a Priest that His intercession can be made. As He is willing and able to save all who will come to Him, but actually saves those only who do come; so He is willing and able to make intercession for all; but He actually does intercede only for those who, as the apostle expresses it, "come unto God through Him." Our Lord Himself seems very clearly to indicate this when in His intercessory prayer before His crucifixion He says to the Father, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for

<sup>1</sup> Thus Hollaz divides the intercession of Christ into *intercessio generalis*, "qua orat Christus patrem pro omnibus hominibus ut salutaris mortis sue fructus illis applicetur," and *intercessio specialis*, "qua orat pro renatis et electis ut in fide et sanctitate conserventur utque crescant."

them which Thou hast given me : for they are Thine." That at His crucifixion He should have prayed God to forgive His murderers, shows the greatness of His benevolence and grace ; but to adduce this, as is commonly done by the Lutherans, as a proof that He now in heaven pleads on behalf of all men, the unbelieving as well as the believing, is simply absurd.

4. As Jesus Christ makes intercession for His people ; so He alone is their intercessor with God. Believers on earth may make intercession for others, and are enjoined in Scripture to do so ; but this only means that they may ask in prayer good for others, and their asking can become effectual only as their prayers are presented and sustained by the great and only Intercessor in heaven. That the saints in heaven can become intercessors on behalf of those still on earth, is one of the many delusive and pernicious doctrines by which the Church of Rome in its "deceivableness of unrighteousness" misleads men to their destruction. Such a doctrine is not only without a shadow of support from Scripture, but it is opposed to all that Scripture teaches bearing on the subject. It is opposed to the plain and direct utterance of Scripture that there is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus ;" and it is derogatory to the honour of Christ as Mediator, for it supposes that He is either unable or unwilling to intercede for all His people, but must be helped in this by angels and saints in glory. It is opposed to the clear teaching of Scripture that God alone, and Christ as God, can hear prayer, and it leads directly to idolatry ; for those whose intercession is asked come to be necessarily invested in the mind of the suppliant with divine attributes. It is contrary to Scripture, inasmuch as it teaches that departed saints can, on the ground of their own merits, procure blessing for others from God, whereas Scripture teaches that no man, whether on earth or in heaven, can ever acquire such merit, all blessing being solely the gift of Divine Grace. On the minds of those who receive this doctrine it cannot have any other than a debasing effect. It leads to superstition and senseless credulity ; it lowers the standard of devotion ; it leads the mind away from God ; it tempts to trust in an arm of flesh, and thus takes men away from Him who is the alone Saviour

to trust in lying vanities, and thereby to forsake their own mercy.

Calvin, after discussing this subject at some length, thus sums up the whole: "Since the Scripture commends to us as the chief head in the worship of God that we should invoke Him, it is not without manifest sacrilege that prayer is directed to others. Whence also in the Psalms it is said (Ps. xlv. 21), 'If I stretch forth my hands to another God, shall not God require this?' Moreover, since God will be invoked only from faith, and expressly commands prayers to be framed exactly according to His word, and since faith, founded on the word, is the mother of right prayer, in so far as it departs from the word there is of necessity a corrupting of prayer. But, as has been shown, if the whole of Scripture is consulted, this honour is there vindicated to God alone. As respects the office of intercession we see that it is peculiar to Christ, and that no prayer is pleasing to God unless what He, the Mediator, sanctifies. And though believers may mutually offer prayer for the brethren, this in no wise derogates from the sole intercession of Christ, because all, leaning on that, commend as well themselves as others to God. Further, we have shown that ignorantly is this arrogated to the dead, to whom we nowhere read that they pray for us. Scripture frequently exhorts to mutual exchanges of this duty; but of the dead not so much as a syllable. Nay, James, joining together these two, that we confess our faults one to another and pray one for the other, tacitly excludes the dead. Wherefore, to condemn this error this one reason is sufficient, that the beginning of fitting prayer springs from faith, but faith is from the hearing of God's word, where there is no mention of [this] counterfeit intercession; so that superstition has brought in for itself patrons who have not been divinely given. . . . Moreover, this superstition has sprung from distrust, because they have either not been content with Christ as intercessor, or have spoiled Him altogether of His honour. And this latter is easily evinced from their effrontery, because in controversy they use no stronger argument than that the aid of the saints is needful for us because we are unworthy to have free access to God. This indeed is most true, but we gather from this that

they leave nothing for Christ, since they deem His intercession of no avail, unless George, or Hippolytus, or like phantoms be added."<sup>1</sup>

As may be supposed, the Rationalists and Unitarians, denying the proper deity and propitiatory work of Christ, endeavour also to explain away His intercession. Whilst they all agree in maintaining that Christ neither intercedes for men in any proper sense of the term, nor is the medium through which our prayers find access to and acceptance with God, they do not all agree as to what the intercession of Christ really is. They all say the expression is figurative and metaphorical; but as a metaphor or figure must mean something, when they come to say what this means their language becomes very vague and their conclusions somewhat diverse. Some of them resolve the intercession of Christ into a mere expression of His *love* to men. Thus Wegscheider says, "Putting aside Judaic allegories and anthropopathic imagery, it is enough to remember that by the utterances of the sacred writers which affirm Christ to be an intercessor, there is signified in a sort of symbolic way that most tender love with which Jesus Christ always embraces His own."<sup>2</sup> The more common opinion is that by the intercession of Christ is meant the exercise of that power with which He is invested in some way for the benefit of His people. In this way the intercession of Christ is made to be a part of His work as King and Head of His Church, and both are detached from any connection with His work as a Priest. But if this were all that is meant by Christ's making intercession for men, why should the N. T. writers have made use of this expression? As they write distinctly enough of Christ's authority and power, why resort to such a dubious and misleading form of expression if they mean by His intercession nothing more than the exercise of His power? It will not do to say that the verb *ἐντυγχάνειν* is a word of very general signification, for whatever extent of signification it bears it can never be extended so as to denote an exercise of power on behalf of any one; it always means (save when used in its primary sense of lighting upon, with which we have nothing to do) to act by way of application or entreaty

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, lib. iii. cap. 20, § 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Theol.*, § 143.

to some one for something, or on behalf of another, or against another. As used by the apostle, it can only mean to intercede for; and as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews connects the intercession of Christ with His unchangeable priesthood, and the exercise of that in heaven for the salvation of His people, we can come to no other conclusion in fairness of interpretation than that He there as a Priest, on the ground of His sacrifice, pleads for the salvation of those that come unto God through Him.

The intercession of Christ for His people is, then, a great reality. The mode may surpass our knowledge, but of the fact we have the best assurance, and it is one fitted to convey the highest encouragement and the most abiding comfort to the believer.

“Christus orat pro nobis ut sacerdos; orat in nobis ut caput nostrum; oratur a nobis ut Deus noster. Agnoscamus ergo et in illo voces nostras et voces ejus in nobis” (Augustin).

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### II. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.<sup>1</sup>

Our Lord was appointed to communicate the mind of God to man. According to God's gracious and eternal purpose, the truth whereby men are to be restored and sanctified was to be made known to them through the Mediator. This function our Lord discharged *mediately* and *immediately*; the former, as He was the source of knowledge and authority to the prophets and apostles, in whom spake “the Spirit of

<sup>1</sup> [Although it was part of Dr. Alexander's plan to consider in succession the mediatorial offices of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King, no lecture or lectures on the prophetic office of Christ have been found among his papers. In order, however, to give formal completeness to his course of teaching on the mediatorial work of Christ, the paragraph given above is extracted from his article on ‘Theology’ in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.—ED.]



Christ;" the latter, as He Himself appeared, and taught men the will of God. In regard to this, He spoke of Himself as the Light of the World (John viii. 12), and forbade His disciples to be called rabbi or master, seeing One was their Teacher and Master, even Christ (Matt. xxiii. 8, 10; comp. Deut. xviii. 18; Luke xxiv. 19; Heb. i. 1). Jesus as a Teacher did not propagate the doctrines of any sect or school, nor did He utter speculations of His own; He came to make known to men the doctrine of God (John vii. 16). "Doctor doctorum Christus, cujus schola in terra et cathedra in cœlo est," says Augustine. The divinity of His mission, and, by implication, the truth of His doctrine, our Lord proved by His miracles and prophecies.<sup>1</sup>

### III. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

From the consideration of the priestly office and work of Christ we pass on to that of His office and work as King.

i. Christ's kingdom stands in close relation to His priesthood. It was not merely *after* His humiliation and obedience unto death, whereby He fulfilled His priestly function in making atonement for His people, but *because* of this that He entered on His royal dignity as mediatorial King. "Ought not the Christ," He Himself said to His disciples, in reference to the suffering which He had accomplished at Jerusalem, "to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke xxiv. 26. See also Rom. xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 8-10). If our Lord was, and claimed to be, a King before the consummation of His sacrificial work, this was by anticipation, just as He was a Priest by anticipation before He came into our world; but as it was in His obedience and sufferings unto death that His priestly office took effect, so it was in these that His kingly office had its ground and reason. He was exalted to be a King because He had finished the work which the Father had given Him as a Priest to do.

<sup>1</sup> See Neander, *Life of Jesus*, Bk. iv. part ii.; Reinhard, *Versuch über den Plan Jesu*, etc., 5th edit., Wittenberg 1830; Alexander, *Christ and Christianity*, part ii. chap. 4.

And as the kingship of Christ thus rests on His priestly work, so, on the other hand, it is through His kingship that His priesthood secures its ultimate end. For His priesthood contemplates not only the removal of the obstacles which lay in the way of man's restoration to God by making atonement for man's sins, but also the actual bringing of man to God, the complete and final redemption of the sinner from all sin and evil, so that he shall be made one with God in holiness and blessedness; the bringing of that Church which He loved, and for which He gave Himself, through a process of sanctifying and cleansing so as that He shall "present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27). And this Christ as King secures. He has been exalted for this very end (Acts v. 31; Eph. i. 20, 23). As exalted Lord and King He has all power given to Him; and by this power He can secure all the ends of His priestly office and work. In virtue of this He sent forth His apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, and encouraged them by the assurance that He would be with them to the end. As King He sends forth His Spirit to turn men unto Him, and to carry on the work of sanctification in those that believe in Him; just as it was that being exalted by the right hand of God and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed forth those influences by which His apostles were enabled to perform miracles in His name (Acts ii. 33). As He is the Author, so is He the Finisher of faith; and it is in virtue of His kingly power that He both brings men into the Christian course, and enables them to pursue it so that He shall obtain that for which He endured the cross despising the shame, the joy of bringing of many sons unto glory. Our Lord's kingly office is thus closely connected with His priestly office; and hence, when the prophet saw Him in vision, he saw Him as a Priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace was to be between them both, *i.e.* the plan of man's redemption was to be accomplished through the union in the person of the Messiah of the two offices of Priest and King (Zech. vi. 13).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Hengstenberg, *Christology*, vol. iii. p. 358. Clark's Foreign Theological Library.

This is not the only passage in which the kingly dignity of the Messiah is represented in the O. T.; on the contrary, it is as a King that He chiefly appears in the writings of the ancient prophets. By one prophet He is expressly called Messiah the Prince (מָשִׁיחַ הַמֶּלֶךְ, Dan. ix. 25); His throne is said to be for ever and ever (Ps. xlv. 6); the government is upon His shoulders (Isa. ix. 6); God has set Him as His King on His holy hill of Zion (Ps. ii. 6); and of the increase of His government and peace it is declared there shall be no end (Isa. ix. 7). So prominent, indeed, is this representation in the ancient Scriptures that it arrested the attention of the Jews to the neglect of other representations of the Messiah, and led to the almost universal expectation among them that when the Deliverer out of Zion should come, He would appear in all the pomp and majesty of a great world-king.

In the N. T., if it is the priestly office and work of Christ that is most prominently presented, there is no lack of references also to His kingly office and work. He Himself, when before Pilate, asserted His kingship, adding, "to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the Truth" (John xviii. 37). When He made His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem the multitude "took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and this, the evangelist tells us, was in accordance with what is written in ancient prophecy, "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh," etc. (John xii. 13, 15; comp. Matt. xxi. 8, 9; Mark xi. 9, 10). Our Lord spoke much of that kingdom which He had come to establish on the earth, the kingdom of heaven and of God, the reign of truth, holiness, and peace in the inner nature of man; see Matt. xiii. 31-52; Luke xiii. 23-30; Luke xvii. 20, 21, xix. 11 ff.; John iii. 3; Acts i. 3, etc. His apostles were sent forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and they faithfully fulfilled their commission, everywhere "preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ," and, as occasion served, "disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God," or "expounding and testifying the kingdom of God"

(Acts viii. 12, xix. 8, xxviii. 23). They proclaimed that their Master, who had submitted to death that He might take away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, had been raised from the dead, had been exalted to the heavenly throne, had sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and had been crowned with glory and with honour King of kings and Lord of lords, all things being put under His feet (Eph. i. 20-22; Heb. i. 3, x. 12, 13, xii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. xvii. 14). And whilst they emphatically asserted the spiritual character of this kingdom as a kingdom not of meat and drink but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, they at the same time maintained that to Christ as King all things are subjected, that He is Lord of all, and that to Him all beings owe obedience and homage.

"The existence of a kingly office of the Lord," says Oosterzee, "as well as of a prophetic and priestly one, cannot in itself be open to any doubt. As King the Redeemer was already expected and predicted by the poets and prophets of the O. T., and was, moreover, proclaimed by His apostles to friend and foe. His anointing with the Holy Ghost at baptism may be at the same time regarded as His divine consecration to this dignity in the kingdom of God. Even in the days of His humiliation He repeatedly called and showed Himself King: as King, He was displayed even on the cross; and if His resurrection was the manifestation of the most glorious triumph, His ascension was the hour of His coronation."<sup>1</sup>

ii. The kingship of Christ as Mediator is to be distinguished from that sovereignty or supremacy which He has as God. As the equal and fellow of the Father, He is God over all; His dominion embraces the universe; there is nothing over which He has not control; He doeth according to His pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. But it is not of this that we speak when reference is made to the kingship of Christ. It is of His kingship as Mediator, as the God-man exalted in human nature to the throne, that we speak. This differs from His sovereignty as God in several particulars. The one is essential, absolute, underived, and eternal; the other is

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 621.

economical, official, conferred, relative, and special. As God, the kingdom is His by essential right; as Mediator, the kingdom has been given to Him by the Father. As God, His dominion is absolute; as Mediator, His dominion is relative and special, having reference to the economy of grace of which He is the administrator, and to the purposes of God in regard to the salvation of men which He is to carry to their fulfilment. As God, all things are under Him by natural constitution; as Mediator, all things have been put under Him by economical arrangement. As God, He is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible; as Mediator, He is the King whom God hath set on His holy hill of Zion, who, being manifested in the flesh, has been justified in the Spirit, who has been received up into glory, who is seen of angels, and who shall reign until all His enemies are put under His feet.

But though we thus distinguish the reign of Christ as Mediator from His supremacy as divine, it is at the same time to be maintained that it is because He is God as well as man that He has been exalted to the mediatorial throne. Without this He could not have occupied such a place. To a mere creature, however exalted, "all power in heaven and earth" could not have been given; no created hand could grasp such a mighty gift, no created mind could administer such a vast and multifarious empire. A creature, be His endowments what they may, is necessarily limited both in intelligence and power, and to such it is neither possible, nor if possible would it be safe, to entrust unlimited authority and power. Of necessity, then, is it that He to whom such a kingdom is given should be divine. If it is in human nature that Christ sits upon His throne, it is because that nature was assumed by Him who in the beginning was with God and was God.

iii. The kingdom of Christ may be viewed under two aspects, in its general administration as embracing the universe, and in its special administration as identified with the Church. Under both aspects it is as God as well as man that Christ reigns over it. As regards the former, reason itself teaches that to God only can the government of the universe belong; and if Christ is to administer the affairs of His

Church scattered over the world and extending through all time, if He is to secure the final triumph of His cause and bring to a successful issue the course of all who believe in Him, if He is to anticipate, counteract, and overrule all the schemes and efforts of His enemies, if He is to be the Leader and Helper of each of His people in the spiritual life, if He is so to keep and care for all that the Father hath given Him so that none of them shall be lost, and if He is so to control and govern the agencies of the universe as to make all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose,—it must be manifest that only one possessed of omniscience and omnipotence, only one, therefore, truly divine, is competent for such a trust.

(i.) In Colossians (i. 13, 20) there is a remarkable passage in which the apostle dilates on the supremacy of Jesus Christ as connected with His deity. Here, after stating that believers in Christ are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, in whom they have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, the apostle goes on to speak of the majesty and glory of Him into whose kingdom believers are brought. He calls Him "the image of the invisible God," that is, the perceptible manifestation of Him who is invisible, whom no man hath seen at any time, or can see, the reference being, not to the Logos or to the Deity of Christ as such, but to the God-man as He was manifested to men when He dwelt among them, and they beheld His glory as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, and as He is still manifested in the heavenly world to those who there surround His throne. To this the apostle adds the description, "The First-born of all creation" (*πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*), which does not mean the first of creatures that was born, but the Head, the Chief of all creation; just as in Rev. i. 5, He is called *πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν*, "The First-born of the dead," i.e. the Head or Chief of the dead, the Lord of the dead as well as of the living (Rom. xiv. 9), and as Israel is called by God "my first-born" (Ex. iv. 22), to indicate the dignity and pre-eminence to which Israel by being chosen of God as a people peculiar to Himself was raised. In Ps. lxxxix. 27, God says of the Messiah, "I will make Him the

First-born, higher than the kings of the earth," where the meaning can only be, "I will constitute Him Chief, and raise Him above all the kings of the earth." So also in Rom. viii. 29 it is said that God hath predestinated believers to be conformed to the image of His Son, "that He might be the First-born among many brethren;" and in ver. 18 of this first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, Christ is said to be "the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." Not mere priority of being, therefore, but supremacy, pre-eminence in dignity and power, is the phrase *πρωτότοκος* used to indicate; so that when it is said of Christ that He is the First-born of all creation, the idea intended to be conveyed is that He stands at the head of the universe as its Proprietor and Ruler.

He who is thus at the Head of all being, the apostle goes on to say, is also the source and cause of all creation: "In Him were all things created (*ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα*)," not merely by Him but in Him; He was not merely the instrument of creation, but its source and containing cause; as in Him was life (John i. 4), and as in Him shall all be made alive (*ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιήσονται*, 1 Cor. xv. 22); so in Him the whole created universe had its source, both that part of it which is perceptible to us and that which lies beyond our knowledge, both things in heaven and things on earth, even those which are most exalted in dignity and excellent in might, thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers, whether on earth or in heaven. And as all things have proceeded from Him, so to Him all things, as it were, return; He is not only the beginning, but He is also the end of all created being; all things are by Him and for Him; from Him they came, and in Him they find their ultimate end and aim. And as He is before all things,—not as some would have it, as He came into being before all things, but as *He is* before all things, so in Him all things cohere; He holds all together, and preserves them in one vast ordered unity.

The relation in which Christ thus stands to the created universe is that of its Head and Ruler, its Former, Sustainer, and End. In the same relation does He stand to the Church.

He is its Head, its Origin, its Ruler; and He is so on a double ground,—on the one hand, as the First-born from among the dead, invincibly declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection; and, on the other, as the Being in whom God willed that the whole *pleroma*, the totality, of the divine qualities and powers should dwell. It is thus as at once human and divine that He presides over that kingdom which has been given Him by the Father, Head at once of the universe and of the Church.

(ii.) The Church or spiritual kingdom of Christ is the proper sphere of His dominion. There He reigns as sole Head and King. In Him this kingdom begins, by Him all its laws and ordinances are instituted, from Him all the authority exercised in it is derived, by His counsel it is guided, by His power it is protected and advanced, and for Him, for His glory and joy, it exists and is preserved. He reigns there in the midst of His enemies, but in vain do they seek to impair His dignity, to weaken His authority, or to restrain His power. Having all power in heaven and on earth, He can not only frustrate the counsels of His adversaries and beat back their assaults, but He can overrule their agencies and make their schemes and efforts subservient to His own cause. "Head over all things for the Church," He can make all things work together for her good, so that even those things which the enemy has intended for her hurt and hindrance are made to turn out for her help and furtherance.

More particularly, the activity of Christ in His kingdom is exhibited—

1. In the formation and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. He calls out a people for Himself from among the mass of fallen humanity. His Church is gathered by Him from the midst of the unbelieving world. Through His grace men are delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son. As in the days of His flesh He called His disciples to Him one by one, so it is still by His call that men are individually drawn into His kingdom, and it is thus that His kingdom is formed and advanced in the world. It was by no happy accident, by no fortunate concurrence of circumstances, by no counsel or plan of men that His Church was at first founded; it was



because Jesus "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed forth" that mighty influence by which men were converted and brought to acknowledge Him whom the Jews had crucified to be "both Lord and Christ," that His kingdom had its first great beginning in our world (Acts ii. 33-36). And it is by the same power still that it is continued and advanced. Only those whom Christ by His Word and Spirit calls to Himself and draws out of the world, only those who are partakers of the heavenly calling, only those who are called of God unto His kingdom and glory, become subjects of His kingdom, and enter on the enjoyment of its privileges. Men, it is true, must of their own will and choice enter this kingdom; Christ gathers men into His kingdom not otherwise than by inviting and inducing them to come; still, it is only as He by His Word and Spirit draws them to Himself that any will seek or find access to His kingdom. To all who are His subjects Christ may say as He said to His disciples of old, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John xv. 16).

2. Christ as King rules in and over His kingdom. As the "Head of His body the Church," He controls and regulates it. He determines its position and manifestations in the world; appoints the form it has to assume in its outward organizations, enacts the laws by which it is to be regulated and the ordinances which it has to observe. He "holds the seven stars in His right hand," and "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. ii. 1). Nor is it only in the Church at large that He rules; His rule extends to each individual of His subjects in whom He rules by His Word and Spirit, guiding, directing, controlling, and animating each and all of them. They thus live because He lives in them (Gal. ii. 20): they are as living stones in the spiritual temple, because they are built upon Him, the living stone (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5), and rest on Him, the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord (Eph. ii. 20, 21). In this respect He is the sole Head, Master, and Lord in His kingdom. None can share the rule with Him. He needs no vicegerent to govern any part of His empire. Officers He

may appoint in His Churches, agents He may employ to carry out His purposes or administer His ordinances; but these are merely His servants, and they act only by His authority. For any man to claim headship over the Church, for any to assume to make laws for His kingdom or any part of it, is to arrogate for the servant what belongs only to the Master, and is alike impious and mischievous. In His hand is the sceptre, and He delegates it to no other. To Him alone, "in whom are hid all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge," can the rule of this vast empire be safely entrusted. All human hierarchies, all royal supremacies over the Church, are to be denounced as not only inexpedient, but lawless, treasonable, and injurious.

3. Christ as King protects His Church or kingdom. His Church is exposed to the continual assault and opposition of enemies; and so many and so powerful are the influences arrayed against her, and so assiduous are her enemies in their hostility, that were she left without protection she would be utterly destroyed. But she is not so left. Her King is her Defender and Protector. He is the glory of her strength; the Lord is her defence, the Holy One of Israel her King. Protected and defended by Him, no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper. He will baffle the designs, frustrate the schemes, and beat back the assaults of all her adversaries. Though for wise ends He may sometimes restrain His power, and suffer the enemy for a season to seem to prevail, it is only that He may make His Church to feel more intensely how she is dependent on His aid, and may the more certainly and completely overwhelm the aggressor and secure the final victory to His Church. When He ascended the throne the Lord said to Him, "Sit Thou at my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. ex. 1); from that time forth He sits on that throne, expecting with divine patience till all His enemies shall be subdued before Him; and He is constantly on the watch to counteract the efforts of His adversaries, and cover them with defeat and confusion. Nor will He for one moment intermit His care or relax His efforts until all hostility is overcome, and the final triumph of His kingdom is secured. And as He thus protects His Church in her

militant state, so will He bring her at last to glory, having purged out of His kingdom everything that defileth, and perfected in all His subjects the excellency of His own character and image.

The kingdom of Christ, viewed under its different aspects, is sometimes distinguished into the kingdom of Power or Nature, the kingdom of Grace, and the kingdom of Glory. To this there is no objection, so long as it is distinctly kept in view that these are designations of the one kingdom under different aspects or relations; but there is a danger of such distinctions leading to the conceiving of the kingdom as divisible into different realms, lying apart from each other and administered on different principles. This would be a mistake. The kingdom of Christ is one. In the dispensation of the fulness of times God purposed to gather together in one all things in Christ, "both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. i. 10). The power which He has as King is power in heaven as well as on earth, and He exercises that power not over nature only or against His enemies, but also in carrying out the purposes of His grace, and in the consummation of the whole in glory. Grace, as our old divines were fond of saying, is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected and completed for ever. The two are but parts of one grand continuous whole; and in both it is by His mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, that Christ the King administers the affairs, preserves the integrity, dispenses the benefits, and secures the perpetuity of His reign.

(iii.) The kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom. According to His own emphatic declaration, "It is not of this world." It may be in the world, it may include the world in it, but it is not of the world. "In this negation," says Schleiermacher, "there lies first this, that His regal power does not immediately extend over the things of this world and order them, and hence only the inner part of men, each for himself, and in their relation to each other, remains as its immediate sphere. Moreover, this also is implied that He uses for the exercise of His rule no means which depend on things of this world, that is, no constraint to which superiority of material forces belongs, and no enticements or threatenings which need

such support, and operate only on the sensuous nature which belongs to this world.”<sup>1</sup> So also, on an earlier occasion, our Lord, when the Pharisees inquired concerning the coming of the kingdom of God, said, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,”—with outward pomp and show, and by outward means,—“neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke xvii. 20, 21). To the same effect is the declaration of the apostle, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xiv. 17); and his other declaration, “The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power” (1 Cor. iv. 20). It is a kingdom which has its sphere in the inner nature of man. It is the rule of truth, righteousness, and love over the minds and hearts of men; and it recognises no means as legitimate within its province but such as appeal to the intelligence and affections of its subjects.

(iv.) The kingdom of Christ stands thus in a relation to earthly kingdoms of entire independence of them and separation from them. It neither directly interferes with them nor recognises their right to meddle with it. It needs not their aid, and it refuses their control even in the smallest matters. But though entirely separate from earthly kingdoms, it is not hostile to them, except as they may oppose and seek to hinder it. Christ recognises civil government as an ordinance of God, and He commands His subjects to be subject to the powers that be; to give honour to rulers; to pay tribute to whom tribute is due; to obey magistrates, and to make prayer for kings and for all that are in authority (Rom. xiii. 1, 6; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Tit. iii. 1). There is but one limitation to the obedience which they are to render to the higher powers, and that is when what these enjoin is what God forbids. In that case, as God must be obeyed rather than men, it becomes the duty of the followers of Christ to refuse obedience to the human edict; yet must this be done in such a way as not to infringe upon the just claims of the civil ruler, or to indicate rebellion against lawful authority. The Christian, in fact, is to regard himself as a citizen of two cities, a subject of two kingdoms, which, lying

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubenslehre*, ii. 150.

distinct and separate from each other, have each its own claims, and in each of which he has to render obedience to the ruling power within its own sphere, and in such matters as properly belong to it.

(v.) Scripture represents Christ as entering formally and publicly on His mediatorial reign after His resurrection and ascension to heaven. "Who," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). Referring to the exaltation of the Redeemer to universal dominion, Paul says it took place "when God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. i. 20-22). We are not, however, to conclude from this that Christ then for the first time reigned as King. Even before His crucifixion, while He was still on earth and in a state of humiliation, He claimed to be a King, and accepted royal honours. It was as a King that He hung upon the cross, as the inscription which Pilate caused to be put over His cross, and which he refused at the request of the Jews to alter, testified. By the Old Testament prophets He is recognized, even before His advent, as the King whom God had set on His "holy hill of Zion," and on whose shoulder the government was laid. From the first, indeed, ever since the first gospel was preached by God to Adam after his fall, Christ has been virtually mediatorial King as well as Priest of His Church. But it was not till He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, and had ascended into heaven, that He openly and formally assumed His royalty. That was the day of His coronation, when, amid the plaudits of heaven, He was solemnly inaugurated as King, and God in the presence of principalities and powers, gave "Him to be Head over all things for the Church."

We are not, then, as some vainly teach, to expect as yet to come an advent of Christ to take up His kingly dignity and reign in person over His kingdom. He is now upon the throne, and He cannot be more so than He is now. When He comes the second time, it will be to consummate, not to commence His reign, to wind up the affairs of His empire, and as Judge of all, to settle the final destinies of the universe. This shall be at the end of the world, at Christ's

second coming, when all the purposes of His mediatorial reign shall have been accomplished, and all whom the Father hath given to Him shall have come to Him and received from Him eternal life. Being on the throne, He shall continue to reign till all His enemies shall have been put under His feet ; till death itself, the last enemy with which He has to contend, shall be destroyed, and through the resurrection of the dead, and the changing from corruptibility to incorruptibility of those who shall be alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, "Death shall be swallowed up of victory" (1 Cor. xv. 54). Then, all power and authority having been subjected to Him, and all that opposed itself to Him having been put down, the end shall be, and He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24).

## PART IV.

### SOTERIOLOGY.

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#### FIRST DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### PRELIMINARY.—THE NATURE AND CONDITIONS OF SALVATION.

IN entering upon the subject of SOTERIOLOGY, or the DOCTRINE of SALVATION, it will be proper in the outset that we endeavour to obtain just views of the Nature and Conditions of Salvation as a blessing to be enjoyed by sinners of the Human Race.

#### 1. *The Nature of Salvation.*

(1.) As respects its nature, it is obvious in the general that, in order to convey to man the benefit such a word imports, there must be provided a remedy suited to the evils under which he suffers, and commensurate with these evils to their fullest extent. Unless the blessing conferred be exactly adapted to remove the evil endured, it will not be to him a deliverance from the calamities under which he lies; and if it be not adequate to remove *all* the evil that has befallen him, his salvation will necessarily be incomplete; and it may be that a condition of partial cure may prove a greater calamity than that in which he is wholly under the burden of disease.

Now, to determine accurately what are the evils from which man needs to be delivered, we have only to look at

what man was normally and originally formed to be, and contrast that with his present condition as a sinner in the sight of God. In whatever respects his present condition is a departure or defection from his original condition, in these respects he needs salvation, and it is as he is in these respects restored to his first estate that in any true or adequate sense he is saved.

When we consider the account which the Bible gives of man's primal state, we find two facts especially characteristic of it from a moral or spiritual point of view. The one fact is that he enjoyed fully God's approbation; the other is that he possessed in himself likeness to God. He was made in the image and likeness of God; and when God looked on him He pronounced him "very good." In his nature he was like God; in his conduct and character he was approved of God.

Now, his retention of both these primary characteristics was conditioned by his being obedient to the divine will. This is apparent at once as respects his retention of the approbation of God; it needs no argument or illustration to show that if a creature refuse or neglect to do as his Creator enjoins, he cannot continue to enjoy his Creator's approbation. A human prince may continue his favour to one who has transgressed his law; but that is because human laws are not necessarily utterances of the prince's individual will, are not necessarily outward exponents of the prince's inner moral nature, and consequently may be really less agreeable to him than the society or the service of his subject by whom they have been violated. But it cannot be so with God. His law is the expression of Himself; and therefore it would be a contradiction of His own nature were He to continue His approval of any being by whom that law has been transgressed. When man becomes a sinner, we see at once that he *must* by that have forfeited the divine approbation, and come under the divine displeasure.

It is perhaps not so obvious at first sight that man's retention of likeness to God depended on his obedience. But not less real was the connection in this case than in the former. Man's likeness to God is of necessity a spiritual likeness—a likeness not merely as respects spiritual constitu-



tion and the action of his self-conscious soul, but still more as respects moral tastes, tendencies, and likings. Man was like God just as men whose affections, feelings, and leanings are directed to the same objects, lie in the same direction, are like each other. But such likeness cannot coexist with disobedience on the part of man to what God has enjoined: for as what God enjoins is what He wills and approves, disobedience is an express proclamation that man's will and preference are not the same as God's. Man is like God only when he loves and chooses what God loves and enjoins; when his affections rest on that in which God delights; when there is accordance between what he desires and what God desires; when his will moves him to do what God wills; when, in short, the ruling principle of his nature is the love of that rectitude which has its foundation and source in the nature of God. When man, then, sinned he by that very act went away from his original righteousness and so lost his moral resemblance to Him, the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness, and who cannot look upon sin.

It thus appears that by one act of sin man necessarily fell both from the divine favour and from the divine likeness which it was primarily his privilege to possess. And the course thus entered on has a tendency to proceed. One sin conducts to another until the habit of sinning is formed, deep and awful guilt is incurred, the entire moral nature becomes corrupt, and every vestige of moral likeness to God is at last obliterated. Hence, as the race of man increased upon the earth we find evil passions and sinful lusts becoming predominant, crimes and violence filling the earth, wrong thoughts of God and His claims taking possession of men's minds and leading to superstition, idolatry, or atheism, and a decided tendency downwards seizing hold of the race, which, unless counteracted by divine interposition and providential interference, conducts to the degradation of savageism and the gloomy horrors of devil-worship. A similar process is seen in the individual. Leave a man to himself, and he will descend from the innocency of childhood to the lowest pitch of moral and spiritual impurity. The process may be slow, but it will be sure. When once the mind has ceased to be

under the controlling influence of love to God and to goodness, there is nothing within itself to keep it from descending to the lowest abyss of evil. The soul of man, created to hang upon God, possesses no restorative, no recuperative energy by means of which, when once its relation to God is destroyed, it can save itself from going ever farther and farther from Him. The hand of God alone can arrest its downward course and restore it to its original dignity and purity.

It thus appears that in the case of every sinner there are two things requisite in order to his being saved: the one is that he be restored to the divine favour by his guilt being cancelled; the other is that his moral and spiritual resemblance to God be restored by his being brought under the love of goodness and rectitude as the supreme, all-commanding principle of his active nature. When he ceases to be guilty and delivered from condemnation, he stands accepted and approved of God; and when ceasing to desire, admire, or follow what is opposed to the mind of God, he becomes in thought, feeling, and tendency wholly at one with Him: then in the proper and adequate sense of the term man is *saved*; in the expressive language of Scripture he hath "passed from death to life," he hath been delivered "from the kingdom of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." This, however, is not all that needs to be done in the case of man. From the peculiarity of that constitution under which Adam, as the representative of the race, acted, there arises a necessity for another thing being done before either of those I have mentioned can be approached, or man fully restored. Adam not only set to his posterity the example of sinning, but as their head and chief he brought the race as a race into a state of legal disability, which, until removed, precludes all friendly relations between God and them. Their position in this respect is analogous to that of a family which has been attainted through the misconduct of its head. In the case of such a family, so long as the attainder lasts, no individual member of it can aspire to the privileges and honours which his ancestor lost. Before such a thing can be so much as proposed, or any opportunity given to him to seek it, the attainder under which his whole family rests must be repealed.

Even so is it with the race of man suffering in consequence of Adam's sin. The guilt of that sin must be remitted to the race; the legal disability it entailed must be removed, the attainder it brought must be cancelled, and the race as such must stand erect and unimpeached in the high court of heaven, before the way is so much as opened for any individual of the race to aspire to the enjoyment of spiritual blessing.

(2.) In all, then, there are three things to be done ere any man can be saved. First of all, the guilt of Adam's sin must be remitted to the race, and thereby man must be placed in a salvable state; second, the individual sinner must obtain the remission of his sins, and receive acceptance into the divine favour; and, third, he must be "renewed in the spirit of his mind," and brought back to a moral resemblance to God and oneness with Him. The first is universal pardon; the second is individual acceptance and justification; the third is individual sanctification and spiritual redemption; and the combination of these three constitutes complete salvation.

## 2. *The Conditions of Salvation.*

Having thus set forth the nature of salvation, and so explained the terms of this great problem, let us now consider the conditions under which alone it can be successfully wrought out. I speak here, you observe, of *conditions*, not of *means* or *methods*; the plan of redemption is a different object of thought from the primary conditions under which alone any plan can be attempted.

These conditions are two,—

(1.) Man's salvation must come to him from God. The purpose of it must be God's; the provisions by which it is to be attained must originate with Him; and it must be by His application that in each case these provisions take effect. This condition arises necessarily out of the nature of the case.

a. The evils under which man suffers are such as to preclude his salvation originating with himself. Not only is he unable to devise any scheme by which the problem of his salvation shall be solved, but the effect of sin is such as to deprive him of any inclination to be saved. He may feel his present condition to be an evil one; he may feel that a

state of sin and guilt is an unnatural and undesirable state to be in; he may shrink from the probable consequences of a life of sin in a future state of being; and he may sometimes make spasmodic efforts to raise himself into a better and more hopeful state. But withal he has no real desire for salvation such as we have described it. How can he? The very assertion that he is a sinner means that he is under the influence of a power which determines him away from God and God-likeness. But how can a man who, by the ruling and constantly operating principle of his nature is determined away from God, ever determine himself to return to God? How can a man desire that which he abhors? or seek after that from which his soul shrinks? As well might we expect to see water run up a hill as expect desires after God and goodness to originate spontaneously in the bosom of a sinner. His desires, tastes, and affections are averse from all that is holy and divine; and so they must continue, unless God, who alone can do marvels, come forth for his rescue.

b. But not only is man precluded by the very evils under which he suffers from being his own saviour; the removal of these evils involves action on the part of God which only He Himself can determine. It is a maxim of common sense to which all must assent, that none can forgive sins but God only; and there is no man who would have any sense of forgiveness unless he believed that that forgiveness had come to him from God. All feel that under a system of government the power of remitting penalties incurred by a violation of law can reside only in the same authority by which the law itself was promulgated; else would there be an *imperium in imperio*—a sovereign power in that which is professedly subject, and consequently an utter uncertainty whether the law which the sovereign had enacted was to be enforced or not. In God alone, therefore, can reside the power of remitting the transgressions of that law of which He is the author. Besides, as under the government of God nothing of the nature of mistake can be permitted, it is only as the remission of transgression is in the hands of one who is omniscient and unerring that it can be safely administered; for only such an one can know whether all that is needful for the upholding of the divine government has been done, and all the conditions on which

pardon depends have been complied with. God alone can estimate the full enormity of sin as a transgression of His law; God alone can determine what shall be an adequate satisfaction to that justice which sin has offended; God alone can in each individual case decide whether the party is in a fit state to be restored to His favour. The law of the moral universe is that punishment shall follow sin; and if in any case this law is to be suspended and the sinner is to go free and return to the state of a privileged subject, it is God's hand alone that can accomplish the moral miracle, and preserve entire and intact the moral order of the universe, notwithstanding this suspension of one of its most fundamental laws.

c. Not less evident is it that the work of moral renovation in the soul of the sinner must be the work of God. That work is represented in Scripture as a new creation, a being born again, a renewing in the spirit of the mind; and these are works which God alone is competent to perform. Only He who searcheth the heart is competent to estimate the actual state of each soul as respects moral and spiritual character; and only He who can touch the springs of action is able to apply the power by which a soul that has grown old in the habit of sinning can be turned to love, desire, and follow after holiness. For this man has no innate ability; he wants alike the inclination and the power to recover himself from sin; and there is nothing around him that can come to his aid. The desire to repent, the motives to seek renovation, the moral force necessary to break away from old attachments and life-long habits, and to turn into a new and previously avoided path, must be supplied by Him who alone has the hearts of all men in His hand, and can turn them as the rivers of waters. If men are to become new creatures, it must be by the agency of Him who alone can create. If men are to be born again, it must be "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." If men are to be renewed in the spirit of their minds, it must be, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but according to the mercy of God, "by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost." From first to last the salvation of a sinner must be of God.

(2.) This, then, is the first condition of our salvation. The other condition is that, in accomplishing salvation for man, the methods pursued must be such as to do no violence to the natural constitution and laws of our nature. This must be obvious at the first glance from the mere consideration that, as salvation consists in the restoration of man to his primordial condition, its very design would be frustrated were any violence done to the abiding and essential nature of man. The necessity of this condition becomes still more obvious when we consider that man is not a machine or a mere animal whose condition can be altered and amended by mere outward influences and forcible appliances. Man is an intelligent, self-conscious, self-moved agent; and being such he can never become anything but as he knows and chooses and wills to be that thing. Whatever agency, then, God puts forth for man's salvation, the nature of the case requires that it shall act in such a way as to leave man's intellectual and moral freedom perfectly unfettered. Man cannot be saved apart from his own intelligence and will. It must be by knowledge and free choice that he enters into life, as it was by knowledge and free choice that he fell into death. Sin is his intelligent determination of himself to evil; salvation must be his intelligent determination of himself to holiness. A man can no more be good and blessed without the free action of his own soul, than a tree can be covered with leaves without the action of those vital powers within itself which regulate vegetation. Nor would the glory of God in man's salvation be manifested were it otherwise. God displays His glory in regulating all His creatures according to their own laws: were He to depart from this in the matter of man's salvation, and to accomplish that by treating man as a mere machine, it would be a confession of weakness rather than a manifestation of majesty, and would not redound to His glory in the estimation of His intelligent creatures.

Having thus investigated the nature of the conditions of human salvation, we are now in circumstances to proceed to the consideration of the methods and processes by which God actually brings about the salvation of men. And here, keeping in view our preceding remarks, we may conveniently arrange

the whole subject of soteriology under four main heads: first, what God does *for* us and *apart from* us for our salvation; second, what God does *upon* us and *in* us to secure and advance our salvation; third, what God aids us *to do for ourselves* in the matter of our salvation; and fourth, what God secures to us as the result of our final triumph and the consummation of our salvation.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

#### I. THE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

We have already called attention to the fact that salvation can come to man as a sinner only from God. He alone can originate the purpose, devise the plan, and apply the benefit of salvation to man. But if God is to act in this matter, it can only be out of His own spontaneous benevolence that He can act. Man can neither deserve nor demand God's interposition on his behalf; no power superior to God can control His action so as to determine it to man's advantage; and no inherent necessity or want of the divine nature, apart from His benevolence, can impel God to put forth His power for man's rescue. To the divine benevolence alone, therefore, can man look for deliverance. From this alone can help come to the sinner.

The testimony of Scripture on this head is explicit and full. To the grace, the love, the benevolence, the pity, the philanthropy of God it traces everything that has been purposed and everything that has been done or is done for man's redemption. It is of His own good pleasure that He hath redeemed us. It is because He is rich in mercy that He hath quickened us. It is by grace that we are saved. He hath commended His love to us in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us (comp. Eph. i. 5, ii. 4, 5; Rom. v. 8).

Now, there is a twofold aspect under which the divine

benevolence towards man may be viewed, and a corresponding distinction which has to be made as respects that benevolence. It may be viewed in its bearing on the race of man at large, and it may be viewed in its bearing on that portion of our race actually redeemed by means of that scheme or plan of redemption which God has provided. Viewed under these two aspects, it has been distinguished by theologians into the *Divina Benevolentia universalis* and the *Divina Benevolentia specialis*.

The *Benevolentia universalis* of God, or His gracious leaning toward the race of man, notwithstanding their sin and rebellion, is designated in the Bible by various terms, such as χάρις, "grace or favour;" πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος, "wealth or riches of the favour" (Eph. i. 7, ii. 7); ἔλεος, "pity" (Eph. ii. 4; Tit. iii. 5); σπλάγχνα ἐλέους Θεοῦ (Luke i. 78); ἀγάπη (1 John iii. 10); φιλανθρωπία and χρηστότης (Tit. iii. 4). Out of this, as the foundation and source of all blessing to man, has flowed everything that has been done by God for the recovery of our race, lost and ruined by sin.

This universal benevolence of God has manifested itself in various ways.

i. It has appeared in His compassion and pity for man, though guilty, whereby God has spared the race, though its existence has been forfeited by sin, and with long-suffering patience bears with individuals and communities, though their iniquities are multiplied and seem to rise up in witness against them. If sin be an act of rebellion against God, and if it deserve His wrath and curse, we can account for the fact that a sinful race is preserved, and that individuals and communities continue to exist and even to enjoy prosperity, though persisting in sin, only by the consideration that He against whom they have sinned is full of pity and compassion, and in the greatness of His benevolence spares them from the penal consequences of their sin.

ii. The universal benevolence of God appears in His not "willing" (i.e. desiring, wishing, feeling complacency in) that any should perish, but that all should be saved. This is repeatedly attested in Scripture (Ezek. xviii. 32, xxxiii. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4). These passages are not to be understood as having reference to the counsels or purposes of God, for as



God's counsel shall stand, and as He will do all that He purposes, had He willed in this sense the salvation of all men, all men should certainly have been saved. The passages have reference to what God wills in the sense of having pleasure in; and they most strikingly set forth the riches of His benevolence towards mankind in general, the tenderness of His compassion even towards those whom, for reasons known only to Himself, He does not put forth His power to save.

iii. God has shown His benevolence to our race in the mission of His Son into the world for the benefit of the world, and especially for the world's salvation through Him. Whatever special reference the work of Christ may have had, or may be supposed to have had, to those who are actually saved by it, there can be no doubt that it had a general reference to the race at large, and that in virtue of it blessings many and great flow to the race. Indeed, apart from this, how can we account for the fact of man's continued preservation, to say nothing of the innumerable temporal comforts which the race enjoys? If life, happiness, well-being have been forfeited by sin, how comes it that life, happiness, and well-being are continued to man the sinner? It is not enough to say that God's mercy and benevolence continue to be in these. That is perfectly true; but then the question arises, How can this benevolence find scope to exercise itself upon one who is under the sentence of a law which forbids such benevolence to be showed to a sinner? This is just in substance the question that arises when we ask, How can man be just before God? and as we answer that question satisfactorily only by calling in the operation of the propitiatory mediation of Christ, it is to this also we must appeal in order to be able satisfactorily to answer the question before us. The great fundamental principles on which God's moral government is placed shut us up to the conclusion that from the righteous Ruler of the universe no blessing can come, no favour can be shown, to a sinner, except on the ground of a mediatory satisfaction; and this applies as much to temporal blessings and favours as to those which pertain to our spiritual interests. To the mediation of Christ, then, must we refer the continuance of our race in existence, and the enjoyment by the race of temporal

advantages. To Him also are to be traced all those collateral advantages which mankind reap from Christianity, advantages which extend to multitudes to whom Christianity is unknown or repudiated. Especially, however, are we indebted to Him for the salvation which He hath procured for us, and which has an aspect towards the race at large. On this head we need only cite our Lord's words to Nicodemus in proof of what we have advanced. "God," says He, "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). In this passage it is distinctly asserted that it is the divine benevolence to our race at large that gave birth to the mission of Christ into our world as a Saviour of men. I am aware that attempts have been made to explain the passage so as to limit the term "world" to the chosen people of God, the elect; but all such attempts are found to be futile by the very words of the verse itself. For in the words "that whosoever believeth in Him," etc., a limitation is expressed of the more general term "the world" used in the preceding clause. The parties included, consequently, under this limitation are *part* of the world to which Christ was sent. But the description given of these parties as those who by believing in Christ are saved points them out as the elect of God. Whence it conclusively follows that as the part cannot be commensurate with the whole, the elect, who are but part of the world, cannot be the same as the world. The world here, then, must mean the race of man. We can understand this in no other sense than as intimating that the mission of Christ into the world to procure redemption for man had its source in, and is a manifestation of, the divine philanthropy, the benevolence of God to man, the love of God towards our race.

The qualities of this universal benevolence of God may be briefly summed up in the following particulars. It is—  
 (i.) gratuitous and free (Rom. xi. 32; Gal. iii. 22; Rom. viii. 32); (ii.) it is alike to all (Rom. iii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 3); (iii.) it is sincere and earnest (Ezek. xviii. 23, 32, xxxiii. 11); (iv.) it takes effect and becomes experienced in its direct and full benefit by individuals through certain means and on certain conditions, the means being the manifestation of the truth to men's minds, and the conditions being the reception

of the truth by those to whom it is made known, and the acceptance by them of the blessings it offers.

iv. It is often said that the purpose of God to send salvation to our fallen race is a fact of which Scripture alone gives us any intimation. Now, it is very certain that it is from Scripture alone that we acquire any clear, exact, and detailed information on this subject; Scripture alone makes us certain and clearly cognizant of the fact. But may we not say that natural reason, looking at the actual phenomena of the universe in relation to God's dealings with men, may discern much there to suggest, at least, the *probability* that some such manifestation of God's love to our race shall be given? I am well aware how much of erroneous and unwarrantable discourse there has sometimes been on the subject. I do not forget how it has sometimes been argued that as man is in his present state very unhappy, in many cases most miserable, it is not likely that God, the All-merciful, will leave him entirely and for ever in such a state, but that it is rather to be supposed that He will somehow and at some period send him deliverance. But such argumentation is unreasonable and unsafe. For, in the first place, it overlooks the fact that man's misery is *deserved*; that if he is unhappy it is right and just that he should be so, seeing he has been and continually is guilty of sin. In the second place, it overlooks the consideration that if man is *merely* unhappy there is no special need for any divine interposition on his behalf, inasmuch as the same natural laws, through the neglect or violation of which man has made himself unhappy, will suffice to restore happiness to him if he will only obey them; and, in the third place, this kind of reasoning lands those who embrace and follow it in the serious difficulty, that if it be a reasonable expectation that God, simply because He is All-merciful, will sometime interpose for man's deliverance, then, seeing He has not so interposed for all these centuries and millenniums during which men have been suffering, either He is not so merciful as has been assumed, or He does not do that which it is reasonable to expect Him to do. These considerations are sufficient to guard us against such argumentation as that to which I have referred. If we are to occupy solid ground

on this subject we must take up another position. We must start from the admission that man as a guilty sinner against God's law has no claim whatever upon the merey of God; that he deserves to be miserable here, hereafter, and for ever and that even though God be benevolence itself, that gives no ground to expect *à priori* that He will interpose to save man from the consequences of his own transgression, consequences which come upon him as the result of his being under the moral government of God. And when we stand on this position, there seems to rise a far clearer and stronger probability that God has some purpose of grace and merey in store for man than comes to us from the other hypothesis. For, if man be guilty, why should he be merely unhappy? why should he exist at all in such a state as the present? why should he not be at once swept from the face of the earth, and consigned to that supreme misery which he has deserved by his sin? Why should God preserve the race here, and bestow on us so many alleviations and benefits, and surround us with such inducements to virtue and goodness, had He not some purpose of redemption for us? Why should a race which, if left to itself, would undoubtedly soon die out or be self-destroyed, be marvellously preserved from age to age unless God has some good and gracious purpose to answer in regard to it? Especially, why should this race be preserved in a *capacity* for moral improvement and restoration, if God has not meant to interpose for its restoration and amelioration? If you saw a house, the proprietor of which, though for some reason he had deserted it, yet instead of leaving it to go to ruin or giving it up to another, retained it in his own hands and continued to keep it in repair and to do everything fitted to render it habitable, would you not infer that the probability was that he intended some time to return to it and make it his habitation? And, seeing God has marvellously preserved the human race, not only in existence, but with all its religious capacities and longings, and keeps it capable of receiving spiritual blessing, is there not a probability that He means sometime to return to it and become again its Great Inhabitant? Take with you this fact also, that man has abiding aspirations, and hopes of recovery; he cannot be content with his present fallen condition; he feels

not only that he was made for something better, but that he is even now capable of something better; and that whatever advances he may have made in knowledge and power he still wants something higher and nobler, even a spiritual and moral restoration. If earth were like hell, a place where hope is excluded and all is dark and doomed, we might say that for earth, as for hell, there is no probability of deliverance, no glimmering ray auspicious of a better future. But seeing God so deals with man as to inspire him with an undying hope of a future restoration, does it not seem as if He were giving to him a sure augury of times of refreshing yet to come to him from the presence of the Lord?

The advances which men make in intellectual power and resources, as well as in scientific knowledge and physical resources, suggest the probability that provision will be made for his progress not less in moral and spiritual attainment. "Is the lesser," it has been justly asked, "to advance, and the greater to remain stationary? Does God take greater interest in the mere improvement of human knowledge and refinement than in the improvement of the heart and conduct? . . . Or rather, does not the whole government of God show that He values the former chiefly as subsidiary to the latter? In the past progress of the one we have thus a presumption in favour of the coming progress of the other;" and as the moral renovation of the race can be accomplished only by God's interposing and providing for this, we have in the fact that He enables man to make advances in intellectual and physical attainment what encourages us to expect that He will not fail in some effectual way to interpose and provide for man's higher interests and progress as a moral and spiritual being.

There seems ground, then, for anticipating, even from natural phenomena and on general grounds of reason, that God will interpose in some effectual way for man's restoration morally and spiritually. The considerations at which we have glanced may not separately be thought to be of much weight, but, as has been remarked by the writer I have already quoted, "by their collection and clustering they seem to form a pleasant belt of light—a kind of milky-way—hung over our world in this its dark night to give light to the traveller

who has set out in search of truth." How God will interpose for man's recovery, or whether He will certainly interpose at all, natural reason is incompetent to teach; this knowledge can come to us only by revelation from God. But it is interesting and not unimportant to see how natural reason conducts us to the threshold, as it were, of divine revelation, and bids us wait there, prepared to receive the announcement which God is to make.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

##### II. THE SPECIAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

###### (I.) ELECTION.

Hitherto we have been occupied in considering the operations of the general benevolence of God towards the race of man as seen in the compassion He has showed towards mankind notwithstanding their sinfulness and rebellion, the bounty He has caused them to experience in the gifts of nature and providence, and especially in the provision of the plan of redemption, the gift of His Son as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and the institution of means for the offering to the whole world of the benefits thus secured. We have now to turn our attention to the operations of the special benevolence of God,—that with which He regards His own people or those who actually are saved through Christ.

That God regards such with special favour is admitted on all hands. Nor can it well be questioned, either as a conclusion of reason or as a doctrine of Scripture. It would be absurd to suppose that a difference so immense as that which separates the true child of God from the impenitent sinner should exist without producing some effect on their respective relations to God. It would offend the moral consciousness to be told that the holy and just God regards with exactly the same feelings the man who loves and obeys Him,

and the man who hates Him and acts the part of a determined rebel against Him. And we must resort to singularly violent expedients to force Scripture out of its plain obvious meaning if we are to cancel its testimony in favour of the position that God loves His own people, the purchase of His Son's propitiatory work and the partakers of His grace, with a special love. On this point, then, there is no difference of opinion among Christians; even Unitarians themselves admit that the benevolence of God towards the wicked is not and cannot be the same as the benevolence of God towards the good and virtuous.

But whilst it is universally admitted that God loves the righteous with a special love, there is the utmost difference of opinion as to the operation and manifestation of this special love, particularly as respects the relation which it bears to the personal salvation of the righteous. Is it a love drawn towards them by their goodness, and simply securing to them the benefits which their goodness merits? or is it a love entirely sovereign, *i.e.* which does not find its motive reason in any quality or attribute of those who are the objects of it, and which conveys benefits wholly irrespective of any worthiness or goodness in them? Is it a love *consequent* upon the turning of the sinner to God, or is it a love *antecedent* to that, and of which that is itself a result? Is it a love which begins to operate in time, or is it a love which has been operative from eternity, and which has led by an eternal purpose to the salvation of the saved? If the latter, was the purpose which has terminated on their salvation a purpose to save them, or only a purpose to place within their reach the means of salvation? And if the former, was it a purpose founded on their foreseen faith and obedience, or a purpose irrespective of these, resting on reasons in the divine mind with which these had nothing to do?

The discussion of these questions has much occupied theologians for at least 1400 years, and it does not appear as if there were even yet any approximation towards a healing of the differences which have split them into separate schools and frequently engendered very bitter strifes. This may suggest to us that the questions at issue are really not of very easy solution, and that there is much to be said on both

sides of most of them, if not of all ; and at the same time may hint a preliminary caution against entering upon the examination of the various conflicting opinions in any other than a humble, modest, and candid spirit, with earnest prayer to the Divine Spirit of truth that He would be pleased to lead us into the truth on this subject, so far at least as it is competent for man to comprehend it.

i. There are four leading diversities of opinion on the points at issue by which theologians have been divided into four great schools or parties. These are—

(i.) The opinion that though God *foresees* all things, He *foreordains* nothing in reference to the salvation of individuals, but leaves all to secure for themselves, as free agents, what amount of blessing they can by faith and obedience.

(ii.) The opinion that God not only foresees but foreordains everything, both as respects means and as respects ends, in regard to the spiritual interests of men, having determined by the eternal counsel and decree of His own sovereign will to whom the message of salvation is to be sent and from whom it is to be withheld, and of the former by whom it shall be embraced and by whom it shall be rejected ; consequently, the eternal salvation of the one and the eternal condemnation of the other.

(iii.) The opinion that whilst God does predestinate by a decree certain men to salvation and eternal life, He grounds this on His own prescience of their faith and obedience, so that the decree is not sovereign and unconditional, but is conditioned by their foreseen faith and obedience ; whilst of those that perish God simply foresees the ruin, but in no way ordains it or directly causes it.

(iv.) The opinion that God by an eternal sovereign decree has predestinated certain of the human race unto eternal life, having chosen them for this end of His own free grace before the world began, and having determined to secure to each of them in time the personal enjoyment through faith in His Son of the blessings of redemption, with perseverance therein unto the end ; but that this gracious purpose and working in reference to the saved is not accompanied with any purpose or decree securing the final impenitency, and consequently the final destruction, of the rest of mankind.



These four opinions constitute the great landmarks of theological speculation in the department now before us. The first of them is that held by the Socinians and Lower Arminians; the second is that held by the High Calvinists; the third is that held by the Evangelical Arminians; and the fourth is that held by the Moderate Calvinists. There are other and minor shades of diversity within some of those schools; but these will be best considered as we proceed.

On this, as on all other theological questions, our first care should be to ascertain what the inspired writers have taught concerning it. Let us then, in the first place, with impartial minds and with such aids as God may vouchsafe to us, examine the various passages in Scripture bearing upon this subject, that we may see how far and in what way our only infallible guides in such matters give answer to the questions above proposed.

In examining these passages it will be of advantage, as conducing to clearness, if we consider those which relate to the saved apart from those which relate to the impenitent and lost. We shall thus best arrive at satisfaction upon the point whether God's purposes and dealings towards the latter are of the same kind, though directed to an opposite end, as His purposes and dealings towards the former.

ii. As a sort of preliminary to our examination of those passages which bear on God's purposes and dealings towards the saved, let us cast a passing glance upon those passages in the O. T. which relate to God's purposes and dealings towards Israel. These are not to be identified with His purposes and dealings towards men in the matter of eternal life; but as the same phraseology is applied in Scripture to both, there must be some very close analogy between the one and the other, and it must be evident that as the phraseology is transferred from the literal to the spiritual, we shall be greatly helped in understanding it in relation to the latter by acquiring a just understanding of it in relation to the former.

Of the passages bearing on God's purpose and deeds in relation to the ancient Israel, a selection will suffice for our present purposes. Take the following:—Deut. iv. 37, vii. 6, 7, 8, ix. 5, 6. In exact keeping with these statements is the constant phraseology of the O. T. in respect of the

relation of Israel to God. They are frequently called the "chosen" of God, the children of Jacob His "chosen" ones, His "elect" in whom His soul delighteth. They are represented as "purchased" by Him for Himself, as "redeemed" by Him for Himself, as "created" by Him for Himself. They are described as "called" by Him, as taken from the ends of the earth and "called" from the chief men thereof; and they are repeatedly designated the "called of God." Such phraseology at once reminds us of the language used in the N. T. respecting the spiritual people of God; and it is evident that the one is an imitation or an application of the other. Let us consider, then, what these statements teach concerning the ancient literal Israel.

(i.) They evidently teach that Israel as a nation enjoyed privileges altogether peculiar, and were the objects of a love strictly special. God had not done for any other people what He had done for them, nor had He showed to any other people such love as He had showed unto them.

(ii.) These privileges and this love which were peculiar to Israel were common to all Israel. All who belonged to the commonwealth of Israel, to the seed of Abraham, were alike the objects of this love and the partakers of these privileges. It was to the mass, the body, the community as such that they were exhibited and given.

(iii.) The blessings thus conferred and the love thus showed were all in consequence of an act of choice on the part of God. He had chosen them to be His people, and therefore He blessed them as His people. It was because of this He redeemed them out of the house of bondage, purchased them, and led them forth in His mercy, formed them into a people for Himself, and dealt with them as He had dealt with no other people.

(iv.) This choice was altogether sovereign, *i.e.* it was motivated by no merit of any kind on their part, but was directed solely by the free love of God. Of this the Israelites were again and again assured in the most express terms. It was not their might, nor their goodness, nor their worthiness in any respect that drew down on them the election of God. It was simply because God loved them and would be faithful to the covenant which He had made with

Abraham, their great progenitor, that He showed them this signal favour. It is true that in some of these passages Israel is represented as being chosen and blessed for the sake of Abraham; but as Abraham himself was chosen and blessed, and the covenant given unto him solely as an act of favour, this presents no difficulty in the way of the conclusion which we have enunciated. Granting that they were blessed for the sake of Abraham, yet as he was blessed wholly of grace, the ground of the blessing conferred upon Israel must still be sought in the free grace and sovereign love of God. There is only one passage which seems to intimate anything opposed to this. It occurs in Gen. xviii. 19, where, according to the A. V., we read, "For I know him (Abraham), that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," etc. Here it certainly appears as if the bestowal of blessing on Abraham by God was grounded on the divine prescience of Abraham's piety and dutifulness as well as the obedience of his posterity; and in this case we accordingly seem to have a proof that the choice of Israel was not an absolute and unconditional choice, but one determined by the foreseen goodness and piety of Abraham and his seed. It is only, however, through an error of the translator that the passage appears to have this aspect and meaning. Properly rendered, the words of God run thus: "For I have known him [*i.e.* known him with love and favour] in order that he may inculcate upon his sons and upon his house after him," etc. This translation is rendered necessary by the use of *לְמַעַן* after the verb; this particle can only mean "in order that;" had the writer intended to express in what follows the verb the object of the verb, he would have used the particle *כִּי*. And he uses *יָדַעְתִּי* here in a sense in which the verb *יָדַע* in the O. T., as well as the corresponding Greek in the N. T., is frequently used. Comp. *e.g.* Ps. cxliv. 3, "Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him!"—where the "knowing" of the first strophe is paralleled by the estimating or favouring of the second;—Amos iii. 2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," where "known" is evidently used in the sense of "chosen" or "favoured." So far, then, from

this verse teaching that Abraham and his posterity were chosen because of their foreseen piety and obedience, it teaches that it was in order that they might be pious and obedient that God had chosen them: their piety and obedience were the intended result, not the foreseen ground, of their being chosen and favoured.<sup>1</sup>

A passage which has sometimes been adduced as if it indicated that the choice of Israel was not unconditional, but was dependent on their foreseen obedience, is Isa. lxiii. 8. In the preceding context the speaker celebrates the loving-kindness of the Lord to Israel, and speaks of all the great goodness which He had bestowed upon them, after which he adds, "For He [*i.e.* God] said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so He was their Saviour." From this it has been concluded that God Himself assigns their foreseen fidelity as the ground or motive of His kindness to them. But that this cannot be the meaning of the passage is evident from two considerations; the one of which is, that in the verse next but one following, the 10th, the prophet complains of them as a rebellious and ungodly people who broke their covenant with God, so that if God had chosen them on the ground of their foreseen obedience, He must have chosen them on the ground of what He foresaw would not be,—which is self-contradictory and absurd; the other is that at the close of the preceding verse, the 7th, it is expressly stated that God had showed kindness to Israel "according to His mercies" and "according to the multitude

<sup>1</sup> Rosenmüller's note is, "Vulgo ita redduntur: *Novi enim eum præcepturum esse filiis suis et posteris suis, ut instituta mea serrent et juste et probe vivant.* Quæ quidem interpretatio recte sese haberet si יָדַעְתִּיו eum verbis quæ sequuntur jungeretur per particulam כִּי quod, *vid.* 1 Sam. xiv. 3; Jer. x. 23; Ezek. xxxiii. 33. Sed לִמְעַן אֲשֶׁר לִמְעַן notat *propterea quod, quia*; et יָדַעְתִּיו significat *amorem*; hoc sensu, diligo eum, quia præcipit filiis, etc. יָדַע, *nosse*, valet etiam *alicujus rationem habere, eum acceptum habere.*" Rosenmüller is wrong here in giving to אֲשֶׁר לִמְעַן the meaning of "because;" it means "in order that," "to the end that;" see Gesenius under לִמְעַן. Knobel's note on the passage before us is: "For to be great and famous is he already destined. *For I have known him, i.e.* made acquaintance with him, entered into a closer relation with him (Amos iii. 2; Hos. xiii. 4), and particularly אֲשֶׁר לִמְעַן, 'with the view that,' in order that he may charge his posterity to keep the way of Jehovah, and so to exercise righteousness," etc.

of His loving-kindnesses," expressions which are tantamount to an affirmation of the perfect gratuitousness of God's goodness to them ; so that it would be again a contradiction were we to suppose the 8th verse to contain a statement of the grounds of a goodness which has just before been pronounced perfectly gracious. We may safely say, therefore, that this cannot be the intention of the 8th verse, nor do its words, properly rendered, convey any such idea. The particle *ἄρα* which our translators render "surely," is usually employed by Isaiah in the sense of "only," and it is here rendered by Rosenmüller "tantum." Nor does the verse begin with a causal particle ; it begins with the copulative *καὶ*. Instead, therefore, of containing the cause or reason of what goes before, this verse simply continues the specification of God's great goodness to Israel : "He said, Only they are my people, my children that will not lie ; and He was a saviour (or deliverer) to them." He not only chose them as His people, but He, as it were, placed confidence in them and treated them as His true and faithful children, and rescued them from the house of bondage. There is nothing here of foreseen faith and obedience as a ground of choice ; there is only an utterance of reasonable expectation that those who had been chosen to be God's own people would keep faith with Him, and be His true children.

When we compare the statements of the N. T. respecting the divine choice of Israel, we shall find that they strongly affirm the perfectly sovereign character of that choice. It may suffice to refer to what Paul says in Rom. ix., where among other statements appertaining to the ancient Israel we have the following : ver. 7, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children : but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called : that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Abraham had more sons than Isaac, and on natural principles they were as much entitled as he to the privileges of the covenant ; but it was not on natural principles that this was determined ; the gracious promise of God was here alone efficient, and therefore as that promise respected Isaac he alone was privileged. The apostle goes on to illustrate this still more pointedly in the case of Jacob and Esau : "And not only this ; but when

Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth), it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." No two brothers could possibly be placed on more of an equality than were these two. The twin children of one father and one mother, there was nothing that could possibly determine any superiority of the one over the other, save the few minutes of priority which the elder had over the younger in entering the world. And yet this one solitary advantage which Esau had over Jacob was set aside by God, who, before the children were born, announced that the elder should serve the younger. For this no reason apprehensible by man existed. It was done that the purpose of God according to election, His wise and well-founded purpose according to free and sovereign choice, might stand. He preferred Jacob and rejected Esau; that is all we can say of the matter. He acted in this as He always acts in dispensing His grace—solely as He willed. This is His rule, and His righteousness is made apparent by His never departing from it. With Him there is no respect of persons. He gives blessing or withholds it because so it seems good in His sight. He puts one in a position of advantage both naturally and spiritually, and leaves another without any such advantage because so He has in His sovereignty purposed and willed. In giving advantage to one, however, and withholding it from another, He does not directly inflict evil on that other, or doom him to a course of iniquity, and to destruction finally. He simply leaves him without the advantage He gives to the other; leaves him to follow his own course, not, it may be, without bestowing on him much good, but without the special advantage He has given to another. Esau was not left wholly without a blessing; but he was rejected from the place assigned to Jacob, and refused the special blessing which Jacob received.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ELECTION.

(II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS.—*Passages and Inferences.*

We now proceed to the examination of those passages which more directly bear upon the manifestation of God's special love to His spiritual people in their election and calling.

We shall begin by citing the principal of these passages in the order in which they occur in the N. T.:—Acts xiii. 48; Rom. viii. 28-30; Rom. ix. 14-16, 21-24, xi. 5-7; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; Gal. iv. 9; Eph. i. 4-6; 1 Thess. i. 4, v. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, ii. 9; 2 Pet. i. 10; Rev. xvii. 14.

Such are some of the more important passages bearing on this subject. The mere reading of them over may suffice to show how important a place this topic occupies in the N. T., whilst the number and variety of the statements made encourage us to hope that by a careful, modest, and impartial examination of them we may arrive at a satisfactory conclusion regarding the doctrine of Scripture on this head. And here it may not be unseasonable to utter a caveat against all rash and presumptuous speculations on a theme so recondite as that now before us, as well as all impatience of those limits which are necessarily imposed upon all human knowledge in regard to matters pertaining to God and His ways. "First of all," says Calvin, "let it be borne in mind that when men inquire into predestination, they penetrate into the inner shrine of the divine wisdom, whither, if any rush securely and confidently, he shall, without obtaining what shall satiate his curiosity, enter a labyrinth from which he shall find no exit. Nor is it reasonable that what God has willed should lie hid in Himself man should with impunity discuss, and from eternity itself evolve the sublimity of wisdom which God willed to be adored, not apprehended, that by means of it He might also be wonderful to us. What

of the secrets of His will He hath thought proper to be unfolded to us, these He has delivered in His word; and He has done this in so far as He foresaw it would convince us, and conduce to our advantage.”<sup>1</sup> On all such subjects we may say with Augustine, “*Melior est fidelis ignorantia, quam temeraria scientia.*”<sup>2</sup>

From a careful examination of these passages the following positions may, we think, be legitimately deduced:—

i. Believers stand in a peculiar and endeared relation to God. They are His people, called by Him into intimate intercourse with Him. They are His “peculiar people,” *i.e.* a people constituting His *peculium* or special property; the phrase used by the apostle to designate this relation, *λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν*, “a people for a possession,” being evidently borrowed from the translation in the LXX. of Mal. iii. 17, where the phrase *εἰς περιποίησιν* is used to express the Hebrew *חֵזְקִי*, signifying property. As this is the word constantly used to describe Israel as the special possession of God (see Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6, etc.), its application to the spiritual Church of God, first by the prophet Malachi and after him by the Apostle Peter, must be designed to indicate to us that just as the ancient Israel in their national capacity were the peculiar property of God as distinguished from all other nations, so are believers in a spiritual sense His peculiar property as distinguished from all other men. There is a sense in which all men, all creatures, are His property; but when God is pleased to say of any that they form His peculiar or special property, we are constrained to believe that He claims in them an interest, and entertains towards them a regard which is confined to them, which is not common to them with any other of God’s creatures.

ii. This special relation into which the people of God have been brought to Him is the result of a choice or election of them by Him. They are called the elect or chosen of God,—an elect or a chosen generation (*γένος*, “race,” “tribe,” “nation”), the election (*ἡ ἐκλογή*, the abstract for the concrete, like *περιτομή* and *ἀκροβυστία* = *οἱ ἐκλεγγόμενοι*); and they are exhorted to know their “election of God,” and to make their “calling and election sure.” From such state-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, Bk. III. ch. 21, § 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Sermo* 27.



ments it is beyond all doubt clear that in *some* sense believers have been chosen of God; and there is no reason why we should not understand this in the *proper* sense of the term. It is true that the term *ἐκλεκτός* is sometimes used in the secondary sense of "precious" or "dear," from the very obvious consideration that what one selects from a mass of other things is usually esteemed highly, and, when the person selecting is wise, is always something intrinsically valuable; and some have proposed to understand the term in one or other of these senses when used of believers in the N. T. According to this, when Christians are called the elect of God, the phrase only means those whom God loves, or regards as precious. But to this no heed can be given by the candid and intelligent inquirer, and that for several reasons—1. No one is entitled to take a word in a secondary and derivative meaning unless the primary meaning has fallen into disuse, or there be something in the context to lead to the preference of the secondary to the primary; it being always presumable that words are used in their primary and proper meaning unless some cogent reason can be shown to the contrary. 2. Of the instances from the N. T. in which *ἐκλεκτός* is supposed to mean "valuable" or "dear," there is not one in which the primary idea of *choice* is not involved; and it is a strange logic which would infer from passages in which a word is used in a secondary sense with a distinct recognition of the primary as giving birth to the secondary, that the word may be used in the secondary sense to the *exclusion* of the primary. 3. Even supposing that it were proved that *ἐκλεκτός*, when used of believers, is to be understood only in the secondary sense, this will not prove that believers are not said to be chosen of God in the proper sense of the term; for there would still remain the passages in which the verb *ἐκλέγω* is used, and on which no such secondary meaning can be put. As the verb in the active expresses the act of Him who chooses, and in the passive the effect experienced by those who are chosen, when believers are said to be chosen of God, or when God is said to have chosen them, no other than the proper meaning of the term can be affixed to it. But if, when believers are said to be chosen of God, we must understand that they are the objects of a discriminating

selection by Him, it seems hardly worth while to contend for another sense when they are called the elect or chosen of God.

The election, then, of believers by God is, in the proper sense of the term, His choosing them to be His. It does not merely express the excellence of their character or the dearness of their relation to Him; it expresses primarily that which is the cause of these, viz. His selection of them, His choosing of them for Himself, whereby they become excellent in themselves and dear to Him. We must also be careful to distinguish the election of believers from their actual separation from the world. In popular language it is usual with us to employ the words "choose" and "elect" so as to denote rather that appropriation to ourselves of any object by separating it from what belongs to others or is common to all which is the result of choice, than the choice itself; and there have been theologians who have allowed themselves to be misled by a similar ambiguity in speaking of God's election of men: they have used the term as denoting the actual separation of believers from the mass of men, and their introduction into God's family. Thus Richard Watson, the ablest defender of Evangelical Arminianism which our age has produced, says: "To be elected is to be separated from the world, and to be sanctified by the spirit and by the blood of Christ;"<sup>1</sup> and this definition of election he employs polemically against the Calvinists for the purpose of reducing them to an absurdity in maintaining the divine election to be from eternity, inasmuch as, according to him, this would be equivalent to affirming that God has from eternity actually separated from the mass of men and actually sanctified those who are saved,—an affirmation at once seen to be absurd and ridiculous. Of the eternity of God's choice of the believer we shall speak by and by; at present what we have to do with is the false conception of the nature of the choice itself, on which alone Mr. Watson has succeeded in giving any show to his attempt at a *reductio ad absurdum* of the doctrine that it is eternal. Be it observed, then, that to be elected is *not* to be "separated from the world and to be sanctified by the spirit and by the blood of Jesus Christ." These privileges may be the result of the divine election—we believe they are; but

<sup>1</sup> *Institt.*, vol. iii. p. 64.

they are not that election itself. That term properly relates to the *purpose* or *determination* in the divine mind to separate some from the world—not the actual separation of them. The two are as distinct in thought as my decision to summon my servant into my presence is distinct from the actual summons which brings him into my presence; or my decision to read one book rather than another is distinct from my actually detaching the book from among its companions on the same shelf for the purpose of reading it. God's calling of a man is one thing; God's selection of the man whom He will call is quite another thing. God's sanctifying of a man is one thing; God's choice of the man to sanctification is quite another thing. It is but an insuring of error to confound things so clearly distinct.

iii. I proceed to remark that this election by God of the believer is an eternal election; or, in other words, God's determination to choose those whom He does choose is one formed from all eternity. This is a position which follows almost by necessary consequence from the preceding position. For if God elect or choose those who are to be His, He must purpose to do this; in other words, His choice must be not a random or accidental choice, but one which He makes wisely and purposely. This conclusion rests upon the most elementary and essential conception of God as a Being of wisdom and knowledge, and cannot be questioned without blasphemy. But another no less elementary and essential conception of God shuts us up to the conclusion that what He purposes He from eternity purposes. We cannot conceive of the Infinite and Eternal beginning to find out a reason for resolving to do what before He had no thought of doing. What He at any time intends to do, He has before all time, from all eternity, intended to do. "If," as Dr. Wardlaw observes, with his usual precision and clearness, "if we admit an intention the moment before putting forth the quickening energy, where, in tracing it back, are you to stop short? where are you to fix its commencement, its first entrance into the divine mind? To suppose," he continues, "an intention to enter the infinite mind that was not there before, is to suppose God to change; and as He always has reasons for His purposes, it is to suppose Him to come to the knowledge of something of which

He had not been before aware, or had not contemplated in the same light. All such suppositions are incompatible with any right conceptions of the divine omniscience and immutability."<sup>1</sup> To this reasoning it seems impossible to frame a sufficient answer. On the ground that what God does He purposes to do, and on the ground that what He purposes He has from eternity purposed, it follows demonstrably that if He chooses men at all, His choice of them is from eternity.

And with this conclusion concurs the language of the passages already quoted. Believers are said to be called according to God's purpose (*κατὰ πρόθεσιν*), where the word rendered "purpose" literally means that which is set before the mind as the object of intention, and then by a very common metonymy the act of the mind in intending, or the intention itself; hence it is properly rendered purpose, counsel, or design. So also it is said of believers that God "hath chosen them before the foundation of the world," a phrase which all are agreed denotes "before all time," from eternity; and the same is the force of the other expression used in parallel passages, "from the beginning," as is evident from the use of it in John i. 1 and elsewhere. On these expressions it is not possible to put any but the one interpretation, and on this all commentators of any note are agreed, however much they may differ as to the objects of the electing choice, or the ends for which they were chosen. Of similar import also is the declaration that believers are "known of God." The verb here must be understood in an emphatic sense. To be known of God in a simple sense, *i.e.* to be the objects of His omniscience, is no more the privilege of believers than it is of others: all things are open and known to Him. That which believers especially enjoy is that they have been known of God as Abraham was, according to a passage formerly examined—known with a peculiar discriminating love—known as the objects of an eternal predestinating purpose. That the N. T. affirms the election of God to be according to an eternal purpose is as certain as that it affirms election to have been at all.

iv. This choice of believers is a choice of them in Jesus Christ. Thus they are said to be "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world," to have been "predestinated unto

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 525.

the adoption of children by Jesus Christ," to have been "appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," and to have been "saved and called with an holy calling according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These passages plainly teach that in *some* sense believers have been chosen in Christ, in other words, that God in the election of His spiritual people had reference in some respect unto Jesus Christ. When, however, we come to ask in what sense is this to be understood, or in what respect had God reference to His Son in the election of His people, we come upon a point which has been warmly contested between the Arminian and Calvinist schools. By the former it is maintained that believers are chosen in Christ in the sense that Christ is the meritorious or proenring cause of election; in other words, that God having first decreed to send His Son to make atonement for the sins of the world, purposed on the ground of this to elect or choose those who believed in Him to be His people. By the latter it is maintained that the election of the saved, though an election of them as persons to be saved through the mediatorial work of Christ, was nevertheless in its source altogether irrespective of this work, and in the order of nature antecedent to the appointment of this work. On questions of this sort I have on former occasions expressed my unwillingness to enunciate any very precise or dogmatic decision, fearing lest by such an utterance one may incur the censure of meddling with matters too high for us. Viewing the question, however, simply as one of exegesis, I cannot but regard the Calvinistic view as, on the whole, the correct one. In several of the passages cited the turn given by the apostle to his statement seems to preclude any other interpretation. He says, "we have been predestinated *through* (διὰ) Jesus Christ," and that "we are appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." In these passages there can be no doubt that the respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, which God is said to have had in the election and predestination of the saved, is respect to Him as the medium of their salvation, not as the meritorious cause of their election. In the other passages the phrasology of the apostle is somewhat different, and at first sight seems rather more in favour of the Arminian view.

To be chosen *in* Christ, and to be saved and called according to grace given *in* Christ Jesus, are statements which undoubtedly *may* mean that it was in Christ that the meritorious cause of the election and the grace was found. Still these passages fall short of affirming that it was *on account* of Christ that believers have been chosen; and they *may* mean that it was as those who should believe in Christ and be saved thereby that believers were chosen, that they were chosen and called to be in Christ, to become partakers of Christ, to enjoy the grace of salvation through Christ. What renders it probable that this latter is the apostle's meaning is, on the one hand, that he elsewhere so strongly affirms election to be of the mere *εὐδοκία* or good pleasure of God, which it could not be if there was a *meritorious* cause of it; and, on the other, in stating that believers are chosen in Christ he adds, "that we should be holy," etc., thereby indicating that, when chosen, believers were not contemplated as actually *in* Christ and therefore holy persons, but as still out of Christ and chosen to be in Him so as to become holy. It may be added that, in writing to the Thessalonians, Paul very explicitly affirms that what God has appointed men to is the obtaining of salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Thess. v. 9). In the divine appointment, then, respect was paid to Christ as the medium through which the salvation of the elect was to be achieved, not as the ground or meritorious cause of their election: our Lord Jesus Christ was regarded as the medium of their salvation, not as the source of their election. Upon the whole, then, the Calvinistic view of this question seems to us the one most in accordance with the apostle's statements; and therefore in speaking of the election of believers as being in Christ, we understand by the position that in choosing them God had respect to Christ as the medium through which their salvation was to be effected;—in the technical language of theologians, in election respect was had to the merit of Christ not *unprecedented*, as the impulsive and meritorious cause on account of which God destined the elect to be saved, but *consequent*, as the primary medium of performing the gracious purpose.

v. From the passages cited it follows that the purpose of God in election is purely sovereign, or, as some have preferred

to express it, arbitrary. By this it is not intended to impute to God anything of the nature of caprice, or to insinuate that in the choice of some rather than of others He has acted without the highest and holiest reasons. All that the phraseology is designed to convey is that the reasons upon which God has acted in this matter are not divulged to us, and especially that they are not to be found in those who are the objects of His grace, or in anything about them. In general, when we speak of the divine sovereignty in relation to God's creatures, the term is used technically for the purpose of expressing the fact that God confers blessing on those who have not deserved it, for reasons of His own of which we are wholly ignorant, and in our present state at least can never discover. And such we affirm to be the case with the election of the saved as taught to us in the passages formerly cited. In connection with this it may be observed that the Scriptures, in referring to this subject, ascribe God's sovereign choice of the saved to His *σοφία* and His *νοῦς* (Rom. xi. 33, 34), and speak of it as His *βουλή* or counsel (Eph. i. 11). It is not, therefore, as if God either acted in this matter *sine ratione*, or as if with Him it was "Sic volo, sic jubeo; stat pro ratione voluntas." He has in this, as in other parts of His procedure, a high and worthy reason, though it be one which lies in a sphere to which our cognizance does not extend.

On this head the testimony of these passages seems very explicit. God is said to have chosen believers from the foundation of the world, and consequently altogether irrespective of any merits of theirs; to have predestinated them according to the good pleasure of His will (*εὐδοκία τοῦ θελήματος*, Eph. i. 5),—an expression which may mean either that so it *pleased* God, seemed good to Him to will, or that it accorded with the *benevolence* of God so to will, the former being probably the meaning to be preferred (comp. ver. 9, where we have the fuller expression, "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself," an expression which can only refer to the self-determination of the divine will, irrespective of any outward motive<sup>1</sup>); and believers are

<sup>1</sup> Grotius: "Ita ut placuit voluntati ipsius." He adds that *εὐδοκία* and the equivalent Hebrew *רצון*, "ubi non personam directe respiciant,

said to have been "predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11). Without quoting more, these passages may suffice to prove the perfect sovereignty of the divine act in the election of believers.

An attempt has been made to evade the force of this conclusion by asserting that though these passages undoubtedly preclude the idea of the divine election being consequent upon the *actual* conduct of believers, they do not preclude the assumption that this election has had respect to the faith and piety of believers as *foreseen* by God. This is a favourite hypothesis of the Arminian school, but it is by no means of Arminian origin. It is not a little curious to find that this was originally the opinion of Augustine. In one of his earlier works, entitled, *Expositio quorundam propositionum ec Ep. ad Rom.*, c. 60, he says, "God did not choose in prescience the works of any one which He was Himself to give, but by His preseience He chose faith, so that such as He foreknew would believe on Him; He chose that He might give to them the Holy Spirit, so as that by doing good works they might obtain eternal life." This opinion he afterwards renounced, and in his *Retractationes* he formally recalled and repudiated his former advocacy of it (Bk. I. c. 23). Traces of the same opinion are to be found in the writings of Jerome and others of the Fathers, especially the Greeks; and among the schoolmen it was advocated by Bonaventura and by Duns Scotus. The latter expressly says,<sup>1</sup> "The divine will concerning creatures themselves acts freely and contingently; wherefore He predestinates men to be saved contingently," thus making the divine choice of men contingent on their

enī tunc prepositio iv solet præponi, sed actionem, talem denotant actionem cuius ratio non solet reddi." Calvin: "*Secundum beneplacitum voluntatis.* Sufficiebat voluntas, solet enim eam Paulus externis omnibus causis opponere, quibus Deum provocari vulgo existiment: sed ne quid ambiguitatis maneret opposuit Beneplacitum, quod nomen omnia merita diserte excludit." Rückert: "By the combination *κατὰ τ. ιδέ. τοῦ θεοῦ*, nothing else evidently can be meant than in virtue of or according to the liking of His will, i.e. He fixed the predestination, not from anything foreign to Himself, but solely because so it seemed good to Him." So also De Wette and Meyer, Olshausen, Harless, etc., take the other meaning, according to the "benevolence of His will."

<sup>1</sup> *In Sent.*, Bk. I. Dist. 40.



piety, and by consequence the divine predestination one founded on the foreseen occurrence of this contingency. Similar to this is the doctrine of the Remonstrant party. Grotius: "Decretum ejus quod Deus facere vult si homines faciant quod debent" (*In Eph. i. 5*). And in their Remonstrance they say more at large: "Denm aeterno immutabili decreto in Jesu Christo, filio suo, ante jaetum mundi fundamentum statuisset, ex lapso peccatis obnoxio humano genere, illos in Christo, propter Christum et per Christum servare, qui spiritus sancti gratia in eundem ejus filium eredunt et in ea fideique obedientia per eandem gratiam in finem perseverant" (Art. I.). They thus make election a mere choice of those who believe, and predestination a mere anticipation of this choice by the foreknowledge of God. By many divines of the Angliean Church this doctrine is also held. Thus Bishop Tomline maintains that "Predestination is founded in foreseen obedience and disobedience," and contends that this is the only sense in which predestination is "reconcilable with the attributes of God and the free agency of man."<sup>1</sup> The eminent Wesleyan theologian, Richard Watson, also takes his stand on this same ground. "Those," says he, "whom He [God] chose in Christ before the foundation of the world were considered not as men merely, which gives no reason of choice worthy of any rational being, much less of the ever-blessed God" [we may remark in passing that no one ever affirmed it did, for all Calvinists agree that the reason of the divine election is not found in the man as such, any more than in the man as a believer], "but as believing men."<sup>2</sup>

Of this doctrine a recent German commentator of the N. T., not remarkable for the evangelical tone of his sentiments, but whose philological and exegetical merits are distinguished, says that it is "destitute of exegetical validity."<sup>3</sup> This judgment is just. There is not a single passage in the N. T. in which such a view of the subject is even by appearance taught, and the entire tone and spirit and expression of the passages already cited are decidedly opposed to it. It is true that the apostle, in writing to the Romans, says that those

<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Christ. Theol.*

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, vol. iii. p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> "Ohne exegetisches recht." Meyer on Eph. i. 5.

whom God has predestinated are those whom He foreknew (viii. 29); and that Peter, in writing to believers, addresses them as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Ep. i. 2). But these passages simply prove what no one is disposed to question, viz. the foreknowledge of God in election. That God foreknew those whom He chose, and that His choice was according to this foreknowledge, are positions involved in the very fact of His having chosen them at all: if there had been no foreknowledge there could have been no such thing as previous election or predestination. But it would be absurd to contend from this that the election was founded in the foreknowledge, as that which supplied the meritorious ground of the election. It is one thing to say God predestinated those whom He foreknew; and it is quite another thing to say that God predestinated them because He foreknew they would be believers, and obedient. The latter statement plainly contains much more than the former, and therefore the former is not competent to cover it. This reasoning goes on the presumption that in the passages quoted the verb "foreknow" and the noun "foreknowledge" relate merely to prescience, merely to God's having intelligence beforehand of what was to happen. But the argument becomes strengthened when we consider that it is not merely in this sense that such terms are used in Scripture concerning the people of God. When God is said to know His people, more is meant than that He is acquainted with them and their circumstances. "*Γινώσκειν*," says Usteri, "when used of God in reference to persons, expresses an acknowledgment or owning which has its ground in love; the concept of the Hebrew *יָדָע* has been transferred to the Greek word"; and as instances he adduces Amos iii. 2; Hos. xiii. 5; Ps. i. 6; Matt. vii. 23; 1 Cor. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 19. We have already seen this usage of the term in relation to the ancient Israel, and also the usage of the term "foreknew" with a similar force. We are entitled, therefore, to say that, as a matter of usage, where foreknowledge is ascribed to God in reference to those whom He predestinates, it is foreknowledge in the sense of *forloving* and *forowning*; and in this case every such supposition as that the predestination of believers by God

finds its ground in His foresight of their faith and obedience, is not only shown not to be in the passages, but to be formally excluded by them: in this case election according to foreknowledge is simply election according to sovereign love, the election of grace.<sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps hardly necessary to dwell on the refutation of an opinion which is thus exegetically baseless; but as it has been held by so many men of learning and ability, it may be worth while to devote to it a little further notice. I observe, then, that this opinion is liable to the following fatal objections:—

(i.) It is irreconcilable with the strong and decided terms in which the apostle affirms the perfect gratuitousness of election. On this point he uses language than which it is impossible to conceive any more pointed and clear, Rom. ix. 15, xi. 6; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; 2 Tim. i. 9. The testimony of these passages is unmistakable. But how can what they so clearly enunciate be true if the ground of election be found in the foreseen goodness of those elected? What difference does it make in a question of merit whether the deeds by which the merit is secured be seen as past or foreseen as future? In either case it is the deed of the individual that creates the merit and establishes his claim. If, then, God elects man on the ground of foreseen faith and obedience, He elects him on the ground of merit. Here, then, we have a direct and unqualified contradiction of the apostle's explicit statement. It is of him that willeth and of him that runneth, and not merely "of God that sheweth mercy." It is of works and not of pure grace. It is not the foolish and base and despised things of this world that God hath called, but the excellent things of faith and moral goodness—not things that had no being, but things that actually existed and were of moral worth: so that man, the possessor of these, actually *has* ground of boasting in God's presence.

<sup>1</sup> "Πρόγνωσις," says Vorstius, "significat non solum Dei præscientiam, sed conjunctam cum decreto seu voluntate."

"The distinction between προγινώσκειν and προορίζειν is this, that in the former concept the element of knowledge is especially prominent, since every divine determination rests on the basis of His omniscience." Meyer on 1 Pet. i. 2. He adds: "In the classical speech also the original meaning of γινώσκειν occasionally passes over into that of determining; hence γνωσμένοι ἴσται, it is determined."

See, then, how direct is the denial which this opinion flings against some of the plainest sayings of the word of God!

An attempt has been made by some of the Remonstrant party to evade the force of this conclusion by making a distinction between foreseen faith as recognized in the divine decree, and foreseen faith as the ground of the divine decree. Thus Grotius says: "*Hoc decretum salvandi singulares personas, prævisa fide, sed non ob prævisam fidem,*" etc. But this distinction is utterly irrelevant and futile here. For either the foreseen faith formed the ground of the saving decree, or it did not. If it did not, then God's decree to save men is irrespective of their foreseen faith, and we are landed in the conclusion of what Grotius and his party abhor, that of an absolute sovereign decree to save "*singulares personas.*" If, on the other hand, it did, then follows that contradiction of the apostle's language which I have already pointed out—the foreseen faith becomes the meritorious ground of a choice which the apostle most expressly says was not of merit but of grace. Grotius is here on the horns of a dilemma: either he must renounce his Arminianism and become Calvinist, or he must retain his Arminianism and renounce the teaching of the apostle.

(ii.) This opinion is irreconcilable with those passages which represent faith, piety, and holiness as *ends* contemplated by the divine election of believers. Thus we read Acts xiii. 48; Eph. i. 4; Rom. viii. 29, 30; 1 Pet. i. 2. From these passages it clearly appears that in election and predestination God contemplated the sanctification, obedience, and piety of His people as an end to be thereby secured. But if this was an end to be secured by election and predestination, how could it form the foreseen ground of these? Can one and the same thing be both an end and a cause to the same operation? If it is those whom God has ordained to eternal life who believe, how can their believing have formed the ground of their ordination? If God has elected men that they might be holy, how can their foreseen holiness be the ground of His electing purpose? If calling follows on predestination, and justification on calling, and glorification on justification in regular sequence, how can the first step in

the sequence be occasioned by any of the subsequent steps? or would it not be quite as reasonable to say that God justifies men on the ground of their foreseen glorification, as to say that He predestinates them on the ground of their foreseen justification? And if they are "elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ" (*i.e.* personal enjoyment of the blessings secured to them by the sacrifice of Christ), how could their obedience and their justifying faith be the ground of their election? I am aware that this last passage has been differently rendered by some critics. Instead of "elect through sanctification of the Spirit," it is proposed by Calov to render it "elect in sanctification of the spirit," and he understands by the statement "elect as persons in a state of sanctification," *i.e.* on the ground of foreseen holiness. But such a construction of the words is very improbable; and, besides, on this exegesis what are we to make of the following words? If they were already viewed as in a state of sanctification when elected, how could they be elected to obedience and to justification? Are persons first holy and then justified? This exegesis is plainly forbidden by the passage itself, and not less so is that advocated by Mr. R. Watson, viz. that the words *εἰς ὑπακοὴν κ.τ.λ.* are to be construed with *ἀγιασμῷ* and not with *ἐκλεκτοῖς*, so that the meaning would be, not "elect unto obedience," but "elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience"—the obedience being thus regarded as the effect of the sanctification. But though the passage may bear this meaning, what is gained by it? It still remains asserted by the apostle that believers have been elected to spiritual blessings, viz. to the gift of the Holy Spirit to produce obedience; for if the passage, on Mr. Watson's rendering, does not mean this, the apostle is made to affirm that believers are elected to nothing. Besides, what on this interpretation are we to make of the last clause, "and sprinkling of the blood of Christ"? Is this to be construed with *ἐκλεκτοῖς* or with *ἀγιασμῷ*. Obviously not with the latter, for the assertion that believers are sanctified by the Spirit to the end that they may be sprinkled with the blood of Christ would be contrary to the whole teaching of Scripture. But if with the former, then we ask again, what does the Arminian gain by the

change of rendering? If we *must* read "elect unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," *i.e.* unto pardon and justification, why not as well read "elect unto obedience"? The one statement surely is not more reconcilable with the Arminian hypothesis than the other. In this passage, then, no less than in the others, we have a clear assertion of the truth that the election of believers was with a view to their obedience and faith—a truth which is diametrically opposed to the opinion that this election was determined by their faith and obedience as foreseen.

(iii.) It cannot but strike one forcibly, that if predestination is capable of being construed to the understanding so simply as it would be if it were merely a determination to accept as saved certain persons who it was foreseen would save themselves by embracing through faith the salvation offered to them in the gospel, the Apostle Paul makes by far too much of it as a profound fact in revelation, and one at which the natural understanding cannot but stumble. According to this theory the subject is robbed of all difficulty and of all profundity, and becomes one of the simplest things in the world. God, who foresees all things, foresees that when an offer of salvation is made to men some will accept and be saved, and foreseeing this He decrees that such shall be saved. In such a statement there is no mystery, nothing to stumble any one that believes in God and in the gospel at all. But Paul evidently thought that when he was propounding the doctrine of the divine election of the saved he was propounding something very deep, and likely to prove very staggering to the human understanding. Hence his anxiety to meet the objections which he anticipated would arise from this cause. Hence his exclamation by which he would shut the mouth of the gainsayer on this subject: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Hence his resort to the absolute sovereignty of God, and his illustration from the case of the potter who from the same lump of clay can make what sort of vessel he will. And hence the wondering, adoring exclamation with which he closes his discussion: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Evidently the apostle did not find

the subject so perfectly simple as these divines would make it. Is there no reason to suspect from this that the clearness of their scheme has been secured at the expense of truth, and that they have made the problem easy of solution simply by first eviscerating it of some of its essential elements?

(iv.) The Remonstrant divines, and those who agree with them on this point, have, in their zeal to avoid Calvinism, exposed themselves to be dragged into the lowest Pelagianism. This seems to me to admit of logical demonstration; and as Turretine has in a very condensed and clear form presented the demonstration, I cannot do better than translate his words: "If election," says he, "is out of foreseen faith, God must have foreseen that faith either as an act of nature proceeding from us, or as an act of grace dependent on God, or as common to both, an act arising from God and nature conjunctly, and due partly to the one and partly to the other. Now, if He foresaw it as an act of God, then He foresaw it as His own gift, *i.e.* as decreed by Him out of election, and in this case the faith follows the election, not precedes it. If as an act of nature, then we make ourselves to differ, which is a contradiction of what Paul says (1 Cor. iv. 7), and a decisive concession to Pelagius. If as a common act, then either the part which man acts in this determines the part God acts in it, in which case man becomes the architect of his own salvation, and has wherewith he may sacrifice to his own act, seeing he contributes to his own salvation what is the principal part of it; or the part which man acts is determined by the act of God, and in this case election will be the cause of faith, not the contrary. It thus appears that either we must ascend with Scripture to God as Him who maketh man to differ by His own gift, or we must descend with Pelagius to man as causing himself to differ by his own free will: there is no medium between these."<sup>1</sup>

(v.) In fine: If election be on the ground of foreseen faith and obedience, one is prompted to ask, *To what* are the subjects of this faith and obedience elected? Some reply, To actual salvation; others, To the enjoyment of the means of salvation. Now, which of these replies is to be preferred it

<sup>1</sup> *Institut. Theol. Elenct.*, loc. i., qu. xi., thesis xxii.

is no part of our business at present to inquire: what I wish now to bring out is, that on either supposition those holding the opinion we are now examining will find themselves involved in difficulties. For let us suppose their position to be that God elects to salvation those who believe on the ground of their foreseen faith, it will follow that the divine election is wholly ungatory and superfluous: it is an election to salvation of those who have already by God's own scheme of redemption secured salvation by believing in His Son. On this hypothesis, then, God is charged with folly in that He is supposed to have decreed something to happen on grounds which assume that the thing has happened before He decrees it. Let us then take the other supposition, viz. that it is asserted that what God has elected men to on the ground of foreseen faith is not salvation, but the means of salvation. In this case the meaning must be that God has determined to furnish to certain persons the means of salvation, because He foresaw that when so furnished they would use them and profit by them. But those who were thus foreseen to use, etc., do so either by a special operation of God on their minds, securing their so acting, or they do so by their own unaided agency: If the former, the purpose of God concerning them must have embraced the forthputting of this special operation, i.e. they must have been elected to believe, not because it was foreseen they would believe, which is a renunciation of the hypothesis: If the latter, then God is asserted to have acted on the foresight of what He has expressly told us never happens, viz. that a sinner without aid from above accepts salvation and is saved. It is evident, therefore, that this part of the Arminian hypothesis involves its adherents in perpetual contradictions and inextricable confusion.

On these grounds we think the hypothesis that God has elected the saved on the ground of their foreseen faith and obedience utterly untenable. The only ground exegetically solid and logically consistent is that assumed by Augustine: "*Non quia credidimus, sed ut credamus elegit nos.*"

vi. A sixth conclusion which we deduce from the statement of the N. T. concerning the election of the saved by God is, that the divine purpose in election had respect to the



*actual salvation* of those elected; in other words, that it was an election securing to them salvation, and not merely the providing for them of the means of salvation.

(i.) This conclusion rests upon such statements as the following: Acts xiii. 48—where the blessing to which believers are represented as having been ordained is stated to be eternal life; Rom. viii. 29—where conformity to the image of Christ or perfect holiness is distinctly set forth as the end for which God has predestinated believers; Rom. ix. 23, 24—where that to which God is said to have afore prepared His people is glory or final salvation; Eph. i. 5, 11—where that to which believers are said to be called and predestinated of God is that they should be holy and blameless, that they should receive the adoption of children, and that they should obtain the heavenly inheritance; 1 Thess. v. 9—where it is expressly stated that it is to the obtaining of salvation that believers have been appointed; 2 Thess. ii. 13—where it is to salvation and to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ that believers are said to have been chosen and called.

The testimony of these passages is so full and so explicit that it seems marvellous that it should ever have been made a question whether the election spoken of in the N. T. is an election to salvation and eternal life or not. I am aware that attempts have been made to destroy the force of some of these passages as witnesses in support of the affirmative side of this question. But even were these attempts more successful than it can, I think, be shown they are, there would still remain enough, the force of which cannot be weakened or set aside, to show that the election of believers is an election to salvation and eternal life, and not merely to the means of salvation. Of the passages the force of which attempts have been made to invalidate, we may notice one, Acts xiii. 48: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Here everything turns on the meaning of the word rendered "ordained," *τεταγμένοι*, and on this, therefore, the efforts of expositors must chiefly terminate. Now, this is part of a verb which in the active signifies to arrange or put in order; hence to constitute or appoint, to devote, destine, or ordain. In the passive, therefore, it is properly

translated "to be arranged," "appointed," "constituted," or "ordained." So it is by our translators rendered in Rom. xiii. 1: "The powers that be *are ordained* (τεταγμένοι εἰσίν) of God;" and here no one has ever suggested a different rendering; so that our translators in giving it this rendering in the passage before us have, beyond all question, taken the word in its proper and usual acceptation. Those, however, who are opposed to the doctrine of election as an appointment of men unto eternal life, refuse to take the word in this its obvious and wonted meaning, and finding passages such as 1 Cor. xvi. 15, where the verb τάσσω in the active is rendered by our English "addicted," they propose to render the passage before us thus: "As many as were addicted to eternal life believed," *i.e.* as many as in their hearts were inclined for eternal life believed. Were it not that this rendering has actually been given to the passage, and that in a recent publication in this country, it might seem incredible that such a rendering and exegesis should have been proposed. It can be imputed only to the grossest ignorance, presuming that it was uttered in good faith. For the error is so transparent that any one who knows aught of the subject may at once perceive it. In the first place, it is founded on an ambiguity in our English word "addicted," which does not exist in the Greek word τάσσω. By "addicted" we sometimes mean "devoted" or "appointed," but sometimes also, and more generally, "inclined to," "fond of;" whereas the Greek word τάσσω never has any such meaning as the latter. Then, secondly, this interpretation involves the error of giving a passive voice a reflex meaning, and that upon the ground that the active verb followed by ἐαυτοῦς has such a meaning—a blunder so gross that one wonders any man of even moderate attainments should have fallen into it. It is true that some eminent scholars, among others Grotius, have suggested a middle or reflex meaning here, on the ground that τάσσω is often used in a *military* acceptation, so that τεταγμένοι ἦσαν may mean "those who keep rank, who obey orders, who have enlisted, and are where they ought to be." But though this meaning of the word may stand as possible, it is one utterly inapplicable to the passage before us; for the writer does not say merely οἱ τεταγμένοι,

but ὅσοι τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, where the particle εἰς plainly indicates the end for which they were τεταγμένοι;—they were persons arranged, appointed, or ordained unto eternal life, as Chrysostom explains it, *τουτ' ἐστὶ, ἀφορισμένοι τῷ Θεῷ*. Besides, as Meyer remarks in his note on the passage, “what right has a commentator, in order to get rid of a meaning which he does not like, to depart from the plain obvious meaning of the words, and to foist into the passage ideas which there is nothing in the context to suggest or to favour; for what is there here to lead to the supposition of a *military* sense of the words? The context suggests nothing else than the simple meaning ‘ordained’ for τεταγμένοι, and the sense of the *end* or *object* for εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.” He adds, “Among the Rabbins also both the idea and the expression ‘ordained (מוכנים) to the life of the future age’ are very familiar.” Alford in his note on this passage proposes the rendering, “As many as were disposed to eternal life believed.” Here he takes advantage of the same ambiguity as attaches to the word “addicted.” In ordinary speech we say a man is *disposed* to any course when he is inclined to it, when his own liking and choice is towards it. But the verb “dispose” properly means to place, arrange, adapt, or form for any purpose; and “to be disposed,” to be thus by some outer power or influence placed, arranged, or formed. Now it is in the latter of these senses that the Greek word *τάσσω* and its passive *τασσόμαι* are alone used; there is no such ambiguity in the Greek word as there is in the English. To substitute “disposed” then in the rendering for “ordained,” is only to substitute an ambiguous word for one that is not ambiguous, and so to mislead the reader. To the judgment of Meyer, already quoted, I may add that of Olshausen, who says, “In the words, ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, there is to be recognised the idea pervading all Scripture of a *prædestinatio sanctorum*. The attempts,” he adds, “to escape this are extremely forced.” Lechler, one of the latest commentators on the Acts, says, “The words say nothing else than that all those and only those were really converted who were ordained, determined, to eternal life by God.” Both Lechler and Meyer, it is true, affirm that there is no reference here to an absolute decree of predestination; but how any

correct thinker can hold that God has ordained any one to eternal life otherwise than by an absolute decree, I am unable to conceive. That God's preordination should depend on a contingency, is simply unthinkable. If, then, we would not incur the charge of wresting the Scriptures, we must abide by the obvious meaning of this passage, and receive it as affirming that of the multitude to whom the gospel was preached, those believed who were ordained or appointed unto eternal life. Eternal life was the end to which they were appointed of God, and the belief of the truth was the medium through which this was to be realized.

(ii.) To the truth which seems so clearly taught in the passages cited is opposed the opinion of those who contend that what believers are elected to is not salvation or eternal life, but only the means and opportunity of obtaining these. This opinion has found much favour with divines of the Anglican Church. Thus Bishop Tomline says, "There was no *absolute* election of particular persons who must necessarily be saved, but a *conditional offer* of salvation to all,"—of which sentence it is only the concluding part, in which the Bishop expresses his own view, that we quote as worthy of attention. In the same strain also Dr. Whately writes: "By contemplating the correspondence between the Jewish and the gospel schemes, he [the diligent student] will clearly perceive that there is no such distinction among Christians as the called and the uncalled—the elect and the non-elect;" "though all born in a Christian country and initiated into Christ's Church are arbitrarily elected to this invaluable privilege, their salvation is *not* arbitrary, but will depend on the use they make of their privileges; those, namely, to which all Christians are called—the knowledge of the gospel, the aids of the Holy Spirit, and the offer of eternal life; privileges of which all are exhorted, but none are compelled, to make a right use, and which will prove ultimately either a blessing or a curse to each according to the use he makes of them."<sup>1</sup>

This extract from Whately not only clearly states the opinion itself, but glances at some of the arguments by which it is attempted to be sustained. Before proceeding farther, we shall briefly examine these.

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Election*, p. 76. (*Essays*, second series.)

1. An appeal is made to the analogy between ancient Israel and the people of God, and it is argued that as the former were chosen only to the offer of blessings and not to the very blessings themselves, so by analogy we may expect to find that the latter are chosen, not to salvation, but to the offer and the means of it. On this it may suffice to remark that it is an error to assume that Israel was not chosen to blessing, but only to the offer and opportunity of blessing: Israel as a nation *was* chosen to actual blessing of a national kind, and was actually put in possession of that blessing without any merit of their own; so that in so far as analogy may serve to guide us in this matter, we may conclude that what the people of God in a spiritual sense are elected to is actual spiritual blessing, and not the mere offer of it. And, in the second place, it argues great ignorance of typical interpretation to suppose that that of which the ancient Israel was typical was a concrete visible body like a national Church or a body having an outward patent organization, and into which men born within certain geographical limits are initiated by an outward ceremonial. According to all true principles of typical interpretation, it is the mystical body of Christ, the spiritual Israel, the invisible Church, that supplies the antitype of which the national Israel was the type; so that it is between these two alone that any valid analogy can be drawn. But in what possible sense the invisible Church of Christ has been elected to the offer of salvation, I leave it with Dr. Whately and his followers to determine.

2. It is argued that the salvation of individuals is made dependent on their rightly using the means placed at their disposal by God, and that, consequently, it can only be to these means that they are arbitrarily and unconditionally elected. This argument Whately urges with considerable force, and it constitutes the staple argument of the party to which he belongs on the question now before us. As it is not only very confidently urged, but has a certain aspect of speciousness, it may be necessary to examine it carefully.

The force of it lies in the assumed incompatibility of an election to eternal life with the suspension of the actual enjoyment of that life on the right use of certain means of salvation placed before us in the Bible. The question, there-

fore, which we have to meet and dispose of is, Does a command or exhortation to use the means adapted to produce a certain end prove that that end is not predestinated by God? If this question *must* be answered in the affirmative, it must be admitted that a very serious difficulty has been placed in the way of our embracing the conclusion to which Whately and his party are opposed; but if, on the other hand, we find that it must be answered in the negative, we shall easily move out of our way the obstacle which they would place between us and that conclusion to which we think the statements of the inspired writers naturally lead.

Let us then meet this question fairly in the face; and, in the first place, let us ask, Does the predestination of an end necessarily *exclude* the use of means adapted to attain that end? or does it not rather *include* the appointment of these means? These questions we may answer with all confidence, the former in the negative, the latter in the affirmative. For not only does abstract reason conduct us to such answers (seeing there is nothing in this fixing of an end *per se* to supersede the use of means for the attaining of that end, but the very opposite), but all we know of God's own working favours the same decision. All His works, we know, are the results of a previous purpose and a firm decree, for He does nothing at random; and yet are not all His works carried on by the use of means? With confidence, then, may we affirm the perfect compatibility of the use of means to gain an end, with the predestination of that end as one sure to be gained.

Another question let us ask by way of meeting the difficulty now before us, Where the means by which an end is to be accomplished are to be used by intelligent agents, is the exhortation to these agents to be diligent in the use of these means incompatible with the predestination of the end? To this question we answer also unhesitatingly, No. For on a broad and comprehensive view of the subject these exhortations form part of the means by which the end is to be attained. The case stands thus: God predestines a certain end to take place by certain means, which means are of two kinds,—*acts*, and the *motives* by which the acts are to be called forth. He predetermines, therefore, inclusively both the acts which are to result in the end and the motives which

are to result in the acts. But the motives in the case before us are supplied by such exhortations as are supposed in the questions we are considering, so that these exhortations are virtually the motives which prompt to the acts, and consequently form, as said above, part of the means by which the end is to be secured. But we have before showed that the predestination of an event does not exclude, but includes, the use of means adapted to produce the event. It follows that the use of exhortations to agents by whom the operative means must be used is not incompatible with the predestination of the end.

Now, if these reasonings are just, we are guided by them safely and surely to return a negative answer to the question with which we started. If the use of means, and if exhortations to that use, be not incompatible with the predestination of the end which these means are designed to reach, but be rather included therein, then may we confidently conclude that a command to use these means does not prove that the end has not been predestined. The two are perfectly compatible with each other, and consequently the existence of the one can never be legitimately used to prove the impossibility of the other. Difficulties, it is true, hang around this subject on every side; but it is important to observe that it is not at the point before us that the difficulties press. We may not be able to reconcile man's free agency with God's predestination, but that cannot prevent our seeing that, whether we assume these two to exist, or hold that the latter is superseded by the former, it is alike possible to reconcile the exhortation to the use of means with the predestination of the end to be thereby attained; for, whilst in the latter case the exhortation forms simply a link in a preorganized chain, all the parts of which follow, each its predecessor, in necessary sequence, in the former case we have only to suppose that God, in accordance with man's free will, renders the exhortation effectual to remove any difficulty which may arise upon the point before us.

(iii.) Such are the arguments by which it is usually attempted to maintain the opinion that it is not to salvation, but merely to the means of salvation, that men are elected of God. We have found them invalid, and might therefore here

dismiss the subject. But it may not be amiss before doing so to offer a remark or two by way of still further showing the untenability of this opinion.

1. I observe, then, that such an opinion is incompatible with those statements of Scripture which represent actual salvation as an evidence of election. Take, *e.g.*, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power," etc. Here Paul expressly states that he knew these Thessalonians to be elect of God, because they had felt the power of the gospel he preached. But what proof of their election would there have been in this unless this had been the end to which they were elected? Had it been only to the offer of the gospel that they had been elected, there would have been no need for the apostle to lay stress on their not merely having had the gospel preached to them, but having felt the power of it as evidential of their election. On this hypothesis the proof of election is not a man's being converted by the power of the truth, but simply his having heard the truth preached. But not so judged the apostle, as these words evidently show. To his mind the mere coming of the word to these Thessalonians would have been no proof of their being elected of God; what carried conviction to his mind was that the gospel had come with power so as to result in their conversion. And with reason, may we say, did the apostle so judge, for on the former ground he would have had no more evidence of the election of these his beloved brethren than he would have had of those Jews at Thessalonica that believed not, and who would fain have destroyed the apostle, seeing to them no less than to the others did Paul's gospel come.

2. This opinion is incompatible with those passages of Scripture which represent heaven as a place prepared from eternity for the people of Christ. Of such passages we may take our Lord's own words as an example, Matt. xxv. 34: "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." In these words our Lord distinctly states that in appointing the heavenly inheritance God had a reference to those who should enjoy it, and



prepared it for them. But if He prepared it for them, He must have destined them for it, else would His preparation have been subject to failure, which cannot be supposed in God. Such subjection, however, would have been incident to the divine purpose had it been merely to the opportunity of reaching heaven that His people are predestinated; for in that case those to whom the opportunity was given might never have used it, and so many of those for whom God had prepared a place in heaven might never have reached it. Such a thing we know cannot be, and therefore we must repudiate as unscriptural and unsound the opinion that would shut us up to such a conclusion.

3. It may be remarked, in general, upon this theory that it is impossible to see what is gained by it, what difficulties it avoids, what advantages it offers. There still remains upon it an election as arbitrary and sovereign as that which is maintained by the view to which it is opposed. In the one case God is said to elect individuals to salvation, in the other He is said to elect communities to the means of salvation. Now, the latter is as inexplicable to us as the former. This Whately fully and frankly admits. "Some nations," says he, "had the gospel preached to them long before others; the apostles were directed by the Holy Ghost what countries they should first visit and enlighten by their ministry, and many there are that remain in ignorance of Christianity to this day. We can give no account of this distinction but that such is God's pleasure. No reason can be assigned why we ourselves, for instance, in this country should have received the light of the gospel, while many other regions of the earth remain in the darkness of idolatry. The 'calling' and selection of us and of other Christians to the knowledge of the true God seems as arbitrary as that of the Israelites." Now, all this we cordially admit as just and true and satisfactory. But if it be so as respects national election to the means of grace, is it less so as respects individual election to the enjoyment of the end which these means can alone effect? If an arbitrary grant of the one be not inconsistent with the divine equity, on what ground is God charged with partiality when He is affirmed to have arbitrarily chosen men to the other? If God may without partiality give two talents, may He not also without

partiality give ten? If from the nations of the earth He may, in full accordance with the perfections of His character, select one to whom alone He sends the gospel in word, may He not out of that nation select some to whom He will send also the power by which that word becomes effectual? Is not the latter but an extension of the principle involved in the former? and as in matters of principle there is not a *major* and *minus*, but all acts involving the principle are alike right and alike wrong, is it not clear that either we must deny both elections or admit that the one is as reconcilable with the character of God as the other? Besides, it should not be overlooked that on the theory we have espoused, as that plainly favoured by the N. T. writers, there is a perfect analogy between the course thus attributed to God in grace and the course which we see Him constantly following in Providence. As the supreme source of all good, we see that He not only selects nations as the recipients of special bounties, but out of these nations selects individuals on whom still more special bounties are conferred. Now, if this be the scheme on which God proceeds in the distribution of providential blessings, does not analogy lead us to infer that a similar scheme will be followed in the distribution of the blessings of His grace? At any rate, if the inequality within inequality in the one department be compatible with the divine equity,—and that it is so even the mere Theist must hold,—no less must the analogous phenomenon in the other department be so. Those, therefore, who would press this objection against the Calvinist doctrine had need to take heed that they do not put a weapon in the hands of the Atheist, or cut off their own retreat when hard pressed by him.

It may be further remarked, that to be consistent Whately and his party ought to go a great deal farther in asserting the necessity of perfect equality in God's dealings with those to whom the gospel is sent. For, keeping out of view at present the saving operations of the Holy Spirit, and assuming that men put in possession of the means are left to use these or not without guiding influence from above, are they therefore, I ask, placed on a footing of perfect equality? Do we not find among them the greatest variety of natural ability and capacity? the greatest variety of

circumstances favourable and unfavourable to their becoming religious? the greatest diversity of natural inclination, previous habit, educational bias, domestic and social influence? Now, no man will deny that these have a most potent influence in determining a man's religious decisions and character; nor will any but an Atheist deny that they all flow directly, or next to directly, from the appointment of God. Among those, then, to whom the gospel is sent there is still inequality in point of fitness to profit by that privilege, and inequality proceeding from God. What shall we say to this? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid! But if such inequality of gift does not impeach the righteousness of God, why should the opinion, that the inequality extends beyond what meets the eye, be held to impeach His righteousness? For, observe, this is the entire difference between natural gifts and spiritual gifts in relation to the point before us—that the former are *sure* to be bestowed, whilst the latter are known to be bestowed only by God's *telling us so in His word*. Now, in sober seriousness, what difference can the mere medium through which we ascertain a fact make on the scientific, philosophical, or moral worth of that fact? What should we say, *e.g.*, if an astronomer, who should have faith in all that the unaided eye showed him of the heavenly bodies, but should refuse to accept what the telescope of Rosse or Herschel reveal? Would not all men cry shame on such indiscriminating caprice? But what better are they who admit as prescusing no difficulty those inequalities in God's dealings with men in reference to the securing their salvation which are observable by the unaided reason, whilst they refuse to concede the same in the case of inequalities declared by God in His word to exist, though not discoverable by reason? Suppose, *e.g.*, the case of a young man, endowed with fine abilities, an amiable and reverent spirit, a docile and religious bias, the child of pious parents, by whom he is carefully from his infancy upwards educated in the knowledge of saving truth and trained in the ways of God, and entering on life under all the auspicious and favouring influences which such advantages are calculated to exert. Here is a case in which an individual is by the special kindness of Providence brought to be not far

from the kingdom of heaven, brought, as it were, to its very gates. One step more and he enters it, and becomes one of the saved. Has there, then, in this case been partiality on the part of God? By no means, replies Dr. Whately: *why* God should have showed such favour to this individual, when so many others have been passed by, we cannot tell; "we can give no account of this distinction but that such is God's pleasure;" but far be it for us to impute partiality to God on that account. Well, I would rejoin, suppose that God, having brought the individual thus far on the way of salvation, graciously completes the process by conferring on him a gift by which he is led to take the one remaining step and thereby actually to enter the kingdom; do you say there would be partiality in that? According to the advanced doctrines of Whately and his party, the reply to this must be in the affirmative. But is not such a reply altogether capricious and arbitrary? On what ground is the distinction on which it rests made? If nineteen steps in a process may be legitimately taken, why not also the remaining twentieth? To be consistent, Dr. Whately and his party should utter their protest at an earlier stage—at the first step of the process; they cannot with any decency or logical consistency utter it after they have admitted the propriety of so much of the very same kind of procedure as that to which in the last stage of the process they seek to object. To my mind it seems as plain as reasoning can make it, that either they must charge partiality on the whole of the divine administration in regard to man, and so minister to the cause of Atheism, or they must give up their objection to the doctrine of election as a choosing of men to spiritual blessings, that it impugns the divine equity and impartiality. If they hold it enough for them to say to the Atheist, when he points to the inequalities of dispensation in the bounties of Providence, that such is the will of God, on what principle do they refuse to accept the same reply in relation to the inequalities in the dispensation of grace which the doctrine of election to spiritual blessings involves?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The principles by which the doctrine of divine providence is established are substantially the same with those which support the doctrine of the sovereignty of divine grace in its personal operations. The objections and

vii. The topic we have been considering brings us to the noticing of another general deduction from the passages above quoted, viz. that election is an election of persons, and not of nations or communities. This point has been already partially considered, but it is of sufficient importance to demand a further illustration.

It may be well, in the outset, to remark that, according to the strict analogy with the case of Israel, we should say that it is the Church as the spiritual body of Christ that is elected, just as it was the nation of Israel as a whole that was elected. But if any are disposed to press this analogy to an argument against our present position, we have to ask them to tell us how it is conceivable that the Church should be elected as a whole without each of its members being elected individually? One can understand how a nation as such should be chosen to temporal blessing without respect to individuals, because there are natural causes which secure the continuance of a nation, so that though many of its constituent parts perish it remains as a whole entire. But in the case of a spiritual body, which is kept up not by natural means, but by the constant addition to it of persons who are to share in the spiritual blessings to which the whole are elected, it is impossible to conceive of any other way in which this can be done but by the choice of the persons themselves who are to be so blessed. The apostles, therefore, freely use terms indicative of the personal election of believers to spiritual blessings.

In proof of this we may adduce such passages as the following: Acts xiii. 48—where the distributive *ἑσθι* clearly points to a personal ordination and, consequently, selection; Rom. viii. 28—where it is evident that the purpose of God in calling has respect to the individuals just as much as His overruling providence has in the causing of all things to co-operate for their good; Rom. ix. 15, 16—where the singular number indicates the *individual* character of the dispensation; 1 Thess. i. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 13—where the whole tenor of the

difficulties are accordant and identical; and in both cases the same reasonings, confirmed by various important analogies, and supported by the direct testimonies of Scripture, may be applied with equal force and equal success." *Spiritual Blessings*, a discourse by J. Fletcher, D.D., 5th edition, p. 5.

statement, and especially the distinction instituted between the apostle and those of whose election he speaks, clearly shows that what was in his mind was a personal election of the parties; indeed, the entire circumstances of the case render the supposition that he had in view the election of the community to which these Thessalonians belonged as a recipient of the offer of the gospel almost ridiculous. The same may be said in reference to such passages as the following: 2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, ii. 9; Rev. xvii. 14. If these passages do not teach the election of individuals to spiritual blessings, it seems vain to hope for the explicit statement of any doctrine from the general tenor of apostolic utterance.

Reference has sometimes been made to the use which the apostle makes of the case of Isaac and Ishmael, of Jacob and Esau, in Rom. ix., as if it favoured the idea of a national rather than a personal election. Now there can be no doubt that the apostle introduces these cases as illustrative of the doctrine of election; and consequently they may be with advantage taken as tending to explain the nature of election as understood and taught by the apostle. But on what grounds, we ask, is it assumed that in referring to these cases the apostle referred to communities or nations and not to individuals? So far as his words go his reference is, *prima facie*, to the men themselves. He does not speak of the *posterity* of Isaac and Ishmael, of Jacob and Esau; he simply mentions these men themselves, either by name or by implication. Why then should it be supposed that he has in view here the communities which sprang from them? Such a supposition is purely gratuitous, and made only to serve a cause. Nor is this all; by such a supposition the apostle's instances are deprived of their applicability to the point for which he adduces them. For what does he want to illustrate here? God's sovereignty in selecting the Jews as the recipients of privilege while other nations were overlooked? By no means; on the contrary, what Paul would illustrate and defend in this chapter is God's sovereignty in selecting from the mass of the Jews some as an "election according to grace," while the mass was left to prove that they "are not all Israel who are of Israel." Now this part of the divine

procedure he defends, as against the cavil of a Jew, by showing that in so acting God has only followed the principle on which He had always acted in such matters—the very principle in virtue of which the Jews themselves had come to enjoy their privileges — that, namely, of sovereign personal election according to His pleasure. It would have been no reply to the objection of the Jew to point to the selection of the Jews as a nation; for the Jew did not object to such a selection, or find any difficulty in it: it was by the selection of some of the posterity of Isaac and Jacob from amongst the rest that he was staggered. Now, this could be met only by a reference to the personal election of Isaac in preference to Ishmael, of Jacob in preference to Esau. The Jew's objection was, "Why should God choose some of Israel, and not all?" The apostle's reply is, "On the same principle that He chose one of Abraham's sons and not all, and one of Isaac's sons and not the other, and that by a sovereign choice." It is essential, therefore, to the validity of the apostle's reasoning here that his reference to Isaac and Jacob should be a reference to the individuals and not to their posterity, so that this instance is rather in favour of than opposed to the opinion we would advocate.<sup>1</sup>

It may be remarked, before passing from this part of the subject, that in contending for personal election to spiritual blessings it is not at all necessary to deny or question national election to the means of spiritual blessings. The two are perfectly compatible with each other; in fact, the latter to a great extent is presupposed by the former, inasmuch as it is usually from amongst communities to which the gospel has been sent that individuals are called, and their election of God thereby evinced. We must not be understood, then, as denying an election of nations to the enjoyment of the means of grace; all that we contend for is that it is not to this that the sacred writers usually refer when they speak of election, but to a choice of individuals to actual spiritual blessing.

"The personality of election, if I may be allowed the expression," says Dr. Fletcher, "seems to arise out of its very nature. It is difficult to conceive of any purpose or determination existing in the divine mind without being specific and definite

<sup>1</sup> See Wardlaw's *Systematic Theology*, vol. i. p. 439, etc.

in all its arrangement.”<sup>1</sup> To the same effect President Edwards says, “If God ever determined in the general that some of mankind should certainly be saved, and did not leave it altogether undetermined whether even so much as one soul of all mankind should believe in Christ, it must be that He determined that some particular persons should certainly believe in Him. For it is certain that if He has left it undetermined concerning this or that and the other person, whether ever he should believe or not, and so of every particular person in the world, then there is no necessity at all that this or that or any particular person in the world should ever be saved by Christ for matter of any determination of God’s. So that though God sent His Son into the world, it was left wholly undetermined by God whether ever any person should be saved by Him, and there was all this ado about Christ’s birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God’s right hand when it was not as yet determined whether He should even save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all.”<sup>2</sup>

viii. I proceed to the last deduction which I would make from the statements of Scripture concerning the subject of election and predestination. It is this, that in these God had respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.

This opinion is grounded chiefly on such statements of Scripture as that believers are chosen in Christ, chosen out of the world, that the lump or mass out of which they as vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory is the common lump or mass of humanity to which the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction belong, and that it is to mercy the former are chosen, whilst it is to wrath the latter are doomed. In all these statements the condition of man as already fallen is presupposed. The appointment of Christ as a Mediator presupposes the fall of man as what renders such an appointment necessary, and consequently they who are chosen in Christ must be chosen under the same supposition. They that are chosen as vessels of mercy (σκεύη ἐλέους) must be regarded as needing mercy before they can be so chosen, and consequently as fallen beings. And if believers are chosen out of the world, i.e. the kingdom of darkness, or the mass of ungodly men, and

<sup>1</sup> *Spiritual Blessings.*

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellaneous Observations on Important Doctrines*, ch. iii. § 53.



if it is out of the common lump or mass of humanity that they are prepared unto glory, it is obvious that the choice which took effect in this must have respected them as involved in the world and mixed up with the corrupt mass. We therefore regard the purpose of God in election as having respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.

(i.) The distinction just noted has led to an important division of theologians, and to a variety of designation which is of both historical and dogmatical interest. From asserting the position which we have noted as that apparently supported by Scripture, those who take this view have received the name of *Lapsarians*, because they contend that the divine purpose in election had reference to man as *lapsus*, a fallen being. The position thus occupied, however, is a middle position between two extremes; the one of which is occupied by those who maintain that in predestination God had respect to man simply as a creature and anterior to his fall; the other of which is occupied by those who suppose that God in predestination had respect to man not merely as fallen, but as also redeemed through faith in Christ, or as condemned through final impenitence. Of these two systems the former, from its advocates making the standpoint of the divine predestination, so to speak, above the fall (*supra lapsum*), has received the name of *Supralapsarianism*; the latter, from supposing the divine decree to found upon something subsequent to the fall, has been called *Sublapsarianism* or *Infra-lapsarianism*. These terms are worthy of being correctly understood and remembered, for they form noticeable landmarks in the field of theological speculation. They came into use during the discussions which arose out of the Synod of Dort, and the efforts of the Remonstrants in Holland. Francis Gomarus, the determined opponent of Arminius, may be regarded as the leader of the Supralapsarian party. The views advocated by them, however, had their rise at Geneva. We find the germ of them in Calvin's *Institutes*, as when, *e.g.*, he says, "I confess indeed that all the sons of Adam have fallen into this state of misery in which they are bound by the will of God. . . . When, then, they perish in their corruption, they only pay the penalty of that calamity into which Adam fell by predestination of God, and drew with him all

his posterity ;”<sup>1</sup> and when he seems to homologate the sentiment which he puts into the mouth of an objector, “*quum ergo in sua corruptione pereunt, nihil aliud quam pœnas luunt ejus calamitatis, in quam ipsius [Dei] prædestinatione lapsus est Adam, ac posteros suos præcípites secum traxit.*” By Beza the Infralapsarian doctrine was still more fully developed and strenuously advocated. But it is in the writings of Gomarus and his coadjutors that it appears in its most unqualified form, and has received its most vehement advocacy. By modern Calvinists it is generally repudiated ; though some of them hold that the finally impenitent are the objects of a damnatory decree upon the ground of their foreseen impeniteney.

On the subject now before us the sentiments of theologians fall into three antagonist positions. There is, first, the position of those who maintain that as God has of His own sovereign pleasure, and for reasons known only to Himself, predestinated from all eternity certain men to the enjoyment of eternal life ; so He has, in like manner, with similar sovereignty, and equally irrespective of anything in the individuals, predestinated the rest of mankind to eternal destruction. There is, secondly, the opinion of those who think that though God predestinates men to destruction, it is on the ground of their foreseen transgression and impeniteney. And there is, thirdly, the opinion of those who hold that whilst God has predestinated in a sovereign manner the saved to eternal life, He has not predestinated either absolutely or conditionally the final destruction of any. Among those who hold by the last opinion in the main, there is a difference arising from some holding that there is a decree of preterition in respect of the ungodly, *i.e.* that God has decreed to pass them by, decreed not to exert any special influence on them for their redemption, but simply to pass them by and leave them to themselves ; whilst others, standing firm by the position that God decrees only what He actually does, have not made the passing by of the lost, to whom He does nothing calculated to cause their destruction, the subject of a decree.

Of these opinions the last is the one that most commends itself to my judgment as in accordance with inspired state-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, iii. 23, § 4.

ment upon this subject. But before affirming anything positively here, let us carefully examine those passages of the word of God that bear on this question.

(ii.) In the O. T. there are passages which seem to indicate a divine purpose or decree in the final destruction of sinners. Thus it is said of the sons of Eli, that "they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them" (1 Sam. ii. 25); and in Prov. xvi. 4 we have it asserted as a positive dogma, that "the Lord hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." What seems positively asserted in this latter passage, viz. that by the divine preordination the wicked are made for the purpose of being destroyed, the former passage seems to teach implicitly; because, if God exerted an influence on the hearts of the sons of Eli so as to secure their final destruction, He must from all eternity have decreed this fate for them. Is this, then, what these passages really teach? or is this their apparent, not their real meaning?

With regard to the passage from Proverbs, we may commence by affirming the accuracy of the translation in the A. V. Holden proposes to render it, "Jehovah hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked He daily sustains;" but this is an arbitrary alteration which cannot be tolerated; it sets aside the parallelism, changes the words, and introduces a meaning that has no relation to the context. All the ancient versions and all the modern commentators of note, Rosenmüller, Maurer, Ewald, Bertheau, substantially accord with the A. V. The only alteration that there seems any ground for introducing is the substitution of "itself" for "himself" in the former hemistich, the suffix in לְעַצְמוֹ having reference to לֵב, so that the rendering should be, "Everything hath Jehovah made for itself" (*i.e.* for its own proper end): "the wicked also for the day of calamity." Does, then, this passage teach that God has created wicked men for the purpose of punishing them? We think not. We think the only truth that can be fairly deduced from the whole passage is that there is a fitness according to the constitution of things in wicked men coming to an evil or calamitous end. God does not make them to be evil; He does not create them to destroy them; but He has so arranged it that by a sure

law he that is wicked shall come to evil. "The writer," says Maurer, "does not mean to say that the bad man is created by God with the design of being destroyed, but what he would indicate is that he who does wickedly shall by the divine decree suffer punishment. And this he expresses subtly by saying that all have been made by God, each for its own proper end, also the wicked, of whom the end is that he shall perish." Still more tersely Rosenmüller gives the sense thus: "God hath made all and each so that they respond to themselves, that to each antecedent its proper consequent responds in that order which the Supreme Arbiter of all has once decreed. . . . Nor is this accordance perceptible only in respect of good things, it holds also in respect of evil, since, according to a most just decree, the immitted evil of punishment follows on the permitted evil of sin." So also Bertheau gives the meaning: "The day of calamity consequently comes surely on the wicked." The ancient versions seem to have had a different reading here, for the Chaldee translates, "the wicked is kept unto the day of evil;" and so also the LXX., φυλάσσεται δὲ ὁ ἁσεβὴς εἰς ἡμέραν κακὴν. We have here, therefore, nothing more than a poetical utterance of the great moral truth that God administers His government by a system of penalties adapted to transgressions, and of sure incidence on those who transgress.

As respects the passage concerning the sons of Eli, it may be doubted whether it refers to spiritual death at all, there being a strong probability that it is to temporal destruction that the statement refers; it was the decree of God that they should die and leave the succession open to Samuel, and therefore they were so left to themselves as to ensure that fate. Still, it must be admitted that by adopting this view a mere shifting of the difficulty, and no real solution of it, is secured; for it still remains as the apparent doctrine of the passage that the cause of their wickedness and impenitency was found in God's purpose to destroy them. To evade this difficulty some of the Lutheran interpreters propose to render *ἐπεὶ* here, not by "because," but by "wherefore:" "they hearkened not to the voice of their father; wherefore the Lord would slay them." This suggestion, which has been eagerly caught hold of by some writers on the Arminian side, has

been justly repudiated by Maurer as "falsissimum;" there is no evidence that  $\epsilon\upsilon$  ever has the meaning of "wherefore;" its proper meaning is *that, for, or because*, and by this we must abide. The explanation of the passage given by Grotius is as follows: "From those who commit grievous sins, though long and often admonished, God takes away prudential restraint, and before punishment their wickedness becomes open and manifest. This is peremptory induration. It is to this Æschylus refers—

Θεὸς μὴν αἰτιὰν φύει βροτῶν,  
 "Ὅταν κακῶσαι δῶμα παμπέδην θίλῃ."

With this interpretation of the learned Remonstrant agrees that of the sober Calvinistic Matthew Henry, whose note on the passage is as follows: "They had long hardened their hearts, and now God, in a way of righteous judgment, hardened their hearts and seared their consciences, and withheld from them the grace they had resisted and forfeited. Those," he adds, "that are deaf to the reproofs of wisdom are manifestly marked for ruin." This interpretation seems to exhaust the meaning of the passage. God gave up these young men to their own evil ways. It was His will that they should be left to fill up the cup of their iniquity and to eat of the fruit of their own doings. And being thus left they turned a deaf ear to all their father's admonitions, and recklessly pursued their sinful courses to their own destruction.

I will add here the remarks of a learned German professor on these and analogous statements of Scripture: "All are fully explained on the principle that when moral evil, sin, is carried back to Jehovah, this indicates the conflict of His righteousness with sin and evil, which He overcomes by evil itself, and represents in its inner nothingness. When a man begins with the evil, when his mind apostatizes from God, the consequence is that the evil regularly develops itself inwardly and by outward progress. Where through a man's own fault a beginning is given to the evil, then Jehovah conducts its further course and brings it to its goal. So much these passages teach and no more. When in some of them the discourse is of death, and their corporeal death appears to be an analogue of eternal, in such passages there is not contained the idea of an absolute predestination to evil and destruction,

but they present only the carrying out of that general arrangement of God to its last consequences, that is, to the goal to which the sins chosen by men themselves lead."<sup>1</sup>

The passages to which I have referred, occurring as they do in historical and poetical compositions, would hardly require to be considered so carefully did they stand alone,—not that these parts of Scripture are less truly and fully inspired than other parts, but because it is incident to the historical and poetical style to be less precise and definite in the use of terms than compositions of a more doctrinal or logical character. But these passages meet with such as are analogons to them in other parts of Scripture, some of the strongest of which are to be found in the doctrinal writings of the Apostle Paul. Hence it seemed proper to advert to them as tending to prepare the way for the consideration of the more weighty and difficult utterances of inspiration to which we have now to advert.

Of these the most important occur in the Epistle to the Romans, especially when the apostle speaks of God's different feelings towards Jacob and Esau, when he dwells on God's treatment of Pharaoh, and illustrates His sovereignty in election by a similitude drawn from the power of the potter over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour. These passages have been triumphantly adduced by Supralapsarians as wholly favouring the doctrine of sovereign reprobation, or an absolute predestination of those who are lost to damnation. It will therefore be necessary to attempt clearly and accurately to ascertain what it is that the apostle here actually teaches.

The statements in question occur in Rom. ix. 10–13, 17–24. The former of these sections has already been discussed in another connection,<sup>2</sup> and the conclusions at which we arrived equally apply to the subject before us. We need not therefore dwell upon it further.

The case of Pharaoh is adduced by the apostle as still further illustrating his point, viz. the perfect sovereignty of God in His dealings with men (Rom. ix. 15–18). There is here obviously an allusion to the statement of Moses, that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and the position of the

<sup>1</sup> Lutz, *Bibl. Theol.*, pp. 206, 207.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 235.

apostle undoubtedly is that in some sense God not only dooms men to destruction, but brings about that destruction to which they are doomed. It concerns us to inquire in what sense this is done.

Now be it observed that Moses not only says that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, but he says also that Pharaoh hardened his own heart; and it is noticeable that he makes both these statements exactly the same number of times in his narrative. Seven times he says God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and seven times he says Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Now we must accept both statements, and not ignore either, or dissolve the one in the other. We must neither say, Pharaoh was wholly passive under the hardening hand of God, nor say, There was no agency of God in the matter; He merely witnessed and permitted the agency of the Egyptian king in hardening his own heart. When Scripture makes two statements which do not appear immediately reconcilable with each other, the business of the interpreter is not to absorb the one statement in the other according as his preconceived notions may dictate, but to look out for some principle on which they may be harmonized. The neglect of this has been a fruitful source of error and controversy. Besides this general objection affecting both modes of dealing with the statements of Moses, each of them is liable to serious objection taken by itself. With regard to the first,—that God by His sole and direct agency hardened the heart of Pharaoh,—it can be held by no man who is not prepared to regard God as the author of sin. If it is by His direct operation on the hearts of His saints that He produces all the goodness that is in them, He must also have been the author of all the wickedness of Pharaoh if He directly operated on his heart. To such a conclusion no man can suffer himself to be brought; and as the Bible utterly repudiates it, we may rest assured that any interpretation of any of its statements which logically leads to it must be false. As respects the other opinion,—that God hardened Pharaoh's heart merely by suffering him to go on in his rebellious course,—it may at first sight appear more plausible than the former, but on careful examination it will not be found such as a careful reader can adopt. For, in the first place, what is gained by excluding the divine agency in

every sense from such results? The reply will probably be that it is more in harmony with the grace and benevolence of God to suppose that He simply allowed Pharaoh to take his course, than to suppose that He acted in any way so as to confirm him in that course. But is it true that the permitting of evil which might have been prevented is less difficult to account for in the case of a perfectly benevolent being than the acting so as to secure the commission of evil? At any rate, the supposition I am examining has this difficulty to get over. In the second place, this hypothesis will not meet the actual facts of the case. It will not account for the fact that God said to Moses, *before* he went to Egypt, that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let Israel go; nor will it account for the fact that God told Pharaoh himself that for this cause He had raised him up, that He might show in him His power, and that His name might be declared throughout the earth. It is impossible to read such statements without being convinced that not only was Pharaoh's obstinacy foreseen, but that it was in the purpose of God that he should display this obstinacy, and that God dealt with him so as to bring about this result. Further, the supposition that God merely left Pharaoh to himself is not reconcilable with the fact that all the plagues sent upon Egypt were directly produced by divine power. The fact stands out glaringly on the surface of the history, that God subjected Pharaoh to a course of discipline through a direct forthputting of His miraculous power, the effect of which was to render him progressively more obstinate and hardened. It is impossible for any one to stand by the assertion that God occupied merely the place of an onlooker in this matter. The historical fact that His omnipotence was again and again exerted to produce those events which exasperated and indurated the heart of Pharaoh precludes such a position.

We revert, then, to the statements of Moses, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, and that God hardened his heart. We take both to be true, and the inquiry which, with all modesty, we propose is, In what sense are these statements to be understood? In answering this question I shall do little more than place the real facts of the case before you; they will speak for themselves.



When Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh, and demanded, in the name of Jehovah, that he should let Israel go, he said, "Show a miracle for you," *i.e.* "Prove your commission to be from God by the proper evidence of a divine commission—the working of miracles." This was a reasonable demand, and it was instantly complied with. Aaron's rod was cast down, and it became a serpent. Here, then, was the proof Pharaoh demanded, and in reason he ought to have admitted the claim of Moses and Aaron, and yielded to the voice of God speaking through them. Instead of this, however, he stifled conviction, and cast about for some means of discrediting the miracle which had been performed, and in pursuance of this sent for his magicians,—men who made no pretensions to a divine commission, but avowedly performed tricks by sleight of hand, or through the pretended aid of familiar spirits,—and to them he committed the task of so imitating the miracles of Moses and Aaron as might justify him in treating the miracles of the latter with contempt, as mere pieces of magic or legerdemain. Hence the magicians are said to have *served* Pharaoh with their enchantments. They did not pretend to work miracles; all they did was to try and pour derision on the miracles of Moses, and so aid the king in his preconceived design of resisting, at all hazards, every evidence Moses might afford of being a divine messenger.

Now, from this it is easy to see how Pharaoh hardened himself. He did so by wilfully resisting evidence and stifling conviction. Had he been imposed upon by the magicians so as to be left in honest doubt of the miracles of Moses, or had he been incompetent to see the force of the evidence Moses offered, he might have refused to let the people go, and yet not have come under the guilt of hardening himself against God; but it was his deliberate resistance to clear evidence which constituted his criminality, and by which he effected upon himself that obduracy which resulted in his own destruction.

Let us now ask, What was it that God did so as to promote the same result? Now, here two things are evident as matters of fact. The one is that the miracles which God wrought before Pharaoh exerted a hardening effect upon his

heart; he was, beyond all question, a worse man after witnessing these, and in consequence of witnessing them, than he was before; so that by means of what God did the heart of the Egyptian monarch was hardened. The other fact of which there can be no doubt is that God designed and purposed that the miracles of Moses should have this effect on Pharaoh's mind. Of this we are certain from God's own declaration, first to Moses and afterwards to Pharaoh himself. Now, with these two facts before us, we have only to suppose that God adapted the miracles to produce what they were intended to effect, and which they actually did effect, to complete the whole of what we think is meant by God's having hardened the heart of Pharaoh. For this additional element we cannot adduce the express words of Scripture, but it seems to be so essentially in the reason of the case that I do not see how any one can refuse it. If God did certain things with a view to a certain end, and so as actually to effect that end, it can hardly be maintained by any one that He did not adapt the means to the end.

The view which I have just presented of this much-controverted subject seems to me to commend itself by the circumstance that it does not ask the suppression or emasculation of any statement of Scripture, whilst it preserves unassailed those eternal principles of moral truth which are antecedent to all Scripture, and which Scripture is designed to elucidate and enforce. By means of it we see that there was a real sense in which Pharaoh hardened his own heart, inasmuch as he wilfully set himself up against the most cogent evidence; and that there was a real sense in which God hardened his heart, inasmuch as He instituted a course of procedure which was designed and adapted, not to force or constrain him to be wicked, but to confirm and indurate him in the wicked course which he had wilfully chosen and wilfully persisted in. Throughout the whole the free will, the independent agency, of Pharaoh never was interfered with or overborne. He was, and continued to be throughout, a free and therefore a responsible agent. On him consequently must fall all the blame and guilt of the result; to God belongs the glory of having brought about that result for the immensely important end, in reference to the well-being of a

race, of showing His power, and causing His name to be declared throughout all the earth.

It thus stands out as a great principle, an ultimate fact in the divine administration, that God "will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." *Why* He should choose one for mercy and another for judgment, we cannot say; enough for us to know the fact, and to rest assured that the Infinitely Wise One acts in this as in everything else for the highest reasons and for the worthiest ends. The great difficulty which arises in the mind with regard to the doctrine of sovereign grace has ever been the reconciliation of this doctrine with man's responsibility. Hence the apostle introduces an objector as saying, "Why doth He yet find fault? for who hath resisted His will?" The objector must, in accordance with the preceding context, be supposed to be a Jew, and the drift of his object is this: If, then, it is in fulfilment of the divine appointment that I have rejected Christianity, why am I blained for it? To this the apostle replies, in the first instance, by refuting the feeling from which it sprung, and thereby showing that from the relation of the creature to the Creator there was no ground for any such feeling, or for the objection to which it gave rise (ver. 20). The feeling was one of pride and irreverence. The party uttering it forgot that it was of his Creator that he thus spoke; he thought of Him merely as his superior, not as the Alone, the Absolute; and he forgot that the matter in hand had to do with God in the sphere of His absolute working, and not in the sphere of His relative connection with men as the subjects of His government. In the latter sphere strict justice would have required that all should perish because all had rebelled; and this being the case, if God, acting on higher grounds than those of mere administrative justice, acting as the Sovereign Creator and not simply as the law-restricted judge, chose one man or people to a career of honour and blessing, and others to a career such as their own wicked hearts would delight in, who should dare to arraign His procedure or say unto Him, What doest Thou? "Shall the thing formed," says Paul, "say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The idea here plainly is that outward circumstances do not alter moral obligations.

All men are bound to follow the right, and to eschew the wrong; and though God may arrange the circumstances of men so that some are most favourably placed for being virtuous or learning what is true and good, whilst others are not so placed, but, on the contrary, are surrounded by all that tends to confirm them in ignorance and vice, this by no means exempts the latter from that moral reckoning to which man as a moral agent is subject; and, further, though the progressive wickedness of the one or the goodness of the other may have been purposed by God, and so may accomplish His design, this does not alter the moral quality of the actions of either party, or exempt from responsibility where responsibility is due. Whilst, then, it is quite true that the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews was an event both designed and foretold by God, and whilst He arranged things that they were led to commit their great sin, yet the guilt and folly of it were all their own, and they, acting throughout as free agents, and dealt with by God as a Judge most equitable, had no right to complain that they were condemned for what they knew they had *wilfully* done simply because it was what God purposed they should do. In short, as all that God in His absolute sovereignty purposes is in perfect consistence with what He has bound Himself to do in His relative capacity as a Judge, so no man has any right to reply against Him because he is made amenable to His judgment for offences which have yet furthered the purposes of His sovereignty.

There are some who say that they never can be brought to believe that God should appoint or destine any of His intelligent creatures to destruction. Now, I will fully agree with them that God can never *compel* any man so to act as to secure destruction, either by creating him in such a way as that by the laws of his constitution he cannot but be wicked, or by exerting on his mind an irresistible power, so that he cannot but go on in the way of rebellion and sin. But when not only this is contended for, but when it is also asserted that God cannot, consistently with His own revealed character, ordain any of His intelligent creatures to destruction, I marvel at the boldness which can venture on such a position in the face, not only of such statements as those

of the apostle referred to, but of the fundamental principles of natural theology which the great facts of the universe press upon us. It must be allowed by all that evil exists, that wicked men are actually made worse by the discipline through which God's providence leads them, and that God will actually punish them at the last for their continued rebellion and impenitence. On these points, I say, all must agree; for they are not such as *can* be questioned. Is it any relief to the mind to be asked to believe that all this comes to pass by chance? or that the Moral Governor of the universe rules without a plan, and simply accepts events as they occur? or that He arranges circumstances which exert a certain effect on individuals and lead them to a certain end without having *intended* such an effect or purposed such an end? To my mind these suppositions bring no relief from the difficulties which overhang this subject, rather do they increase them; for they seem to open a path along which a logical necessity would drive men to Atheism. No; if I am to believe in a personal God at all who governs the universe and who is such as the Bible represents, I must hold by the doctrine which I find here—a doctrine which takes the happy mean between Pantheism and Epicureanism, between the doctrine which teaches that all things, the evil as well as the good, are but manifestations of God, and the doctrine which teaches that God dwells aloof from the universe and suffers things to take their course, having no plan to accomplish, no purpose to execute, no result to secure, in connection with events of the universe.

(iii.) From this analysis of these passages let us now turn to collect the sum of their testimony bearing on the question for the sake of which we entered upon the examination of them. This may be stated in the following particulars:—

1. These passages evidently teach nothing incompatible with the doctrine that it is only for sin that God dooms any man to final perdition. Pharaoh was raised up by God and placed in his prominent position that he might give the more striking illustration of the divine power and majesty; but that for which he was condemned was his obduracy in resisting the command of God, and his cruelty to the Israelites. The vessels of wrath are such as are fitted for destruction,

*i.e.* they are persons whose character and conduct are such that there is a congruity between them and the destruction to which by God's just judgment they are doomed. In the case of Esau there is somewhat of difficulty, because there we have the case of one rejected by God before he had done either good or evil. This rejection, however, did not entail upon Esau of necessity any special calamity; it only placed him in a position of inferiority to his younger brother in the matter of the birthright, which did not of itself cut off from him either the hope or the means of salvation and eternal life. If Esau perished at last, it could only be because he persisted in sin and rebellion against God.

2. There is nothing in these passages to show that God operates directly on the minds of any to cause them to be sinful. It is true it is said that "whom He will He hardeneth." But He does this, as the apostle shows in adducing the case of Pharaoh, simply by operations which have a direct bearing on the manifestation of His own perfections and the accomplishment of His benevolent purposes, but which act on the ungodly so as to increase their obduracy and harden them in sin.

3. There seems no authority in these passages for the sublapsarian doctrine that God decrees the ruin eternally of sinners on the ground of their *foreseen* guilt and rebellion. In the case of Esau it is expressly stated that his conduct had nothing to do either prospectively or retrospectively with his rejection; and in the case of Pharaoh the hardening to which he was subjected was itself his doom, and not the foreseen cause of his doom. In the case of the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath, it is expressly said that it is simply of God's will that mercy is shown to the one, while the other is exposed to wrath, and not because God foresaw that the one would be good and the other would be evil.

4. There is no ground in these passages for the doctrine of a decree of preterition in reference to the unsaved. Such a decree, indeed, would seem to be superfluous. If men are wicked, and if their sin deserves the penalty of death, it seems wholly needless that God should solemnly bind Himself by a decree not to interpose to prevent their running their course and reaching its proper goal. We can conceive of

God forming a decree to the opposite effect in the case of the saved, viz. that He will interpose to prevent them ruining themselves; and we can conceive of His decreeing to surround men with circumstances directly adapted to further His own cause, but which they use so as to increase their own ungodliness and secure their own destruction. But that God should decree simply to do nothing in any case, seems a supposition unworthy the perfection of the Most High.

5. Upon the principle that God decrees what He does, we must suppose that what He did which had the effect of hardening Pharaoh's heart was the result of a decree; but we must distinguish between a decree to damn a man irrespective of any deeds of his own, and a decree to confirm and harden a man by giving him opportunity of hardening himself. God, though not the author of sin in any case, and though never directly provoking a man to sin, may yet see meet, when a man has chosen for himself a course of transgression and obstinately persists in it, to surround him with circumstances which tend to push him forward in his evil course, and secure his reaching the goal to which his course naturally tends. In many respects this is an awful doctrine; but it is one so clearly recognized in Scripture that we dare not allow any considerations of a general kind to prevent our accepting it. Every time, indeed, that we say, as our Lord has taught us to say, in prayer to God, "Lead us not into temptation," we recognize the fact that God might so surround us with circumstances that we should be thereby tempted to sin, and so hardened in iniquity and ultimately perish; and knowing this we pray to God in whose hand our life is, and whose are all our ways, that He would so arrange for us the circumstances of our condition here that we shall escape this danger.

## CHAPTER V.

## ELECTION.

(II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS—*continued*.ix. *General Observations.*

Besides the direct scriptural evidence in favour of the views we have enunciated, there are certain considerations of a more general nature, though also based on Scripture, which go to support these views. To these we may now briefly advert.

(i.) It is a datum alike of reason and of Scripture, that God certainly foresees and foreknows all that takes place. As a consequence from this, He foresees and foreknows that certain persons shall be saved by the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus. Now, on what is this foreknowledge founded? Assume that man is perfectly indifferent in the matter, and that the chances are equal that he will accept and that he will refuse the gospel salvation when it is offered to him, in this case it may be admitted that the foreknowledge of God of who should accept and who should reject the gospel, does not presuppose an elective decree on His part, as He would know what causes would determine the contingency in each particular case. But this the Bible will not allow us, to assume; for it informs us that such is man's alienation of heart from God that there is no chance whatever that he will accept the salvation offered to him by God; but, on the contrary, the most absolute certainty that he will refuse it. The fact, then, stands thus: God certainly foreknows that the gospel will be accepted by many of the human race, though it is certain that not one of these, if left entirely to himself, would accept it. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that such foresight rests upon a predetermination to put forth the energy necessary to secure the result; in other words, God foresees that certain individuals of the human race will be saved because He has already chosen these to salvation, and



determined to exert on them saving power. The election of believers, therefore, is postulated by the divine foreknowledge of who shall be saved.

(ii.) Scripture intimates to us that in the covenant of redemption under which our Saviour undertook to make atonement for sin, the Father engaged that He should have a seed to serve Him, that a people should be given to Him, and that He should reap the reward of His obedience and suffering by bringing many sons unto glory. Some may object to the phraseology I have just used in which this is represented as resting on a covenant engagement between the Father and the Son; but as to the thing itself we cannot imagine any person who takes his views of the work of Christ from Scripture to have any doubt. If the Father sent forth His Son to get to Himself a kingdom, if He gave Him up for sinners that they might be saved, if He appointed Him to be the Head of a redeemed body, the High Priest of a ransomed Church, the foundation of a spiritual building composed of living stones resting on Him, the living stone; if, in short, He sent His Son to sustain certain offices and perform certain works on behalf of men,—it cannot be supposed that He would leave it wholly uncertain whether this was to have any result or whether it was to be wholly fruitless. Would it be worthy of God to send His Son on a thriftless errand, or one which, for aught secured to the contrary, might be such? Can we conceive of Him, who doth nothing in vain, constituting His Son a King, and yet securing Him no kingdom? constituting Him a Head, and yet securing to Him no Body? constituting Him an High Priest, and yet securing to Him no people for whom to plead? Or dare we for a moment think of God making the soul of His Son a sacrifice for sin, and yet securing to Him no reward in the success of His work for such unparalleled humiliation? Is it, in short, possible for us to believe that (as Edwards words it) “there was all this arrangement about Christ’s birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God’s right hand, when it was not as yet determined whether He should ever save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all?” These questions, one would think, must be answered in the negative by every devout reader of Scripture. Whether, therefore, we choose

to speak of a covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son or not, this much we may assert as plainly involved in all that Scripture teaches relative to the mission of the Son by the Father,—that when the latter laid upon the former the work of human redemption, it was not left an uncertain thing whether that work should answer its purpose or not. But if the Father engaged to the Son that He should receive a reward in the success of His work for His voluntary submission in undertaking that work, and if in the very act of appointing Him to an official relation to sinners of the human race He also secured to Him that that relation should be a reality and not a nonentity, it follows that He must have purposed to put forth the power by which that was to be secured. For, apart from such a purpose, all is uncertainty, and the Saviour might have come and suffered and returned to heaven, and not a single soul been redeemed as the result of His work. If this be a conclusion from which the pious mind shrinks, it will be for those who reject the doctrine of a personal sovereign election to show how they can reconcile their piety with the principles they avow.

(iii.) The turning-point of this whole question as between Arminians and Augustinians or Calvinists is found in the question, Does the actual salvation of any sinner of the human race originate with himself, or does it originate with God? In other words, does the individual by a purely intellectual process, or by a process of volition wholly self-caused, embrace the salvation offered in the gospel, or is his decision to do so, and the act to which that leads, the result of an influence exerted on him by God? That the whole question of predestination to life turns on the answer to be given to this question must be sufficiently obvious; for, suppose we answer it by affirming the latter of these hypotheses, it follows that as it is by a direct act of God on the soul that the salvation of the individual is secured, and as whatever God does He has from all eternity decreed to do, He must have so decreed to exert upon that individual the energy which has resulted in his actual salvation; in other words, the salvation of that individual must have been the object of an eternal decree, that is, the individual must have been predestinated to life. On the other hand, should we arrive at

the conclusion that in the actual salvation of the sinner God has no part, this being entirely the result of a self-caused volition on the part of the sinner, it will follow that no such thing as a decree predestinating that individual to eternal life can have existed. We are thus led to a further step in our inquiry and to a new position in theology—that, namely, which respects the divine agency in the actual salvation of the sinner.

The intimate and important bearing of this question on the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists may be shown in another way. As we have already seen, Whately considers election to consist in the selecting of communities, to the members of which the offer of salvation, including the aids of the Holy Ghost, is made; and with regard to individuals he would say that their actual salvation depends on their rightly using these means, including their availing themselves of the offered aids of the Holy Ghost. Both parties, then, are agreed as to the aids of the Holy Ghost being requisite to salvation; but whilst the one party say that it lies simply and solely with each individual whether he will avail himself of these aids or not, the other party maintain that the Holy Spirit is given to certain individuals to operate in them a saving change, and that out of this arises their first inclination to listen to the gospel call, and avail themselves of offered privileges. It is obvious that, as between these two parties, the whole controversy turns on the point whether man originates his own acceptance of the aids of the Spirit for salvation, or the Spirit originates in man the inclination to be saved. And according as we decide this point shall we incline to such an election as we have showed to be taught by the apostles, or to such an election as Whately and his party contend for.

To this point, then, we have now to turn our attention; and here, as in regard to the more general question we have already considered, we shall follow the path of simple Biblical investigation. Before, however, adducing the passages of Scripture which bear upon the *work* of the Holy Spirit, it will be necessary that we should adduce the testimony of Scripture concerning the *Person* of the Holy Spirit. In the meantime I shall submit to you a few observations of a

general kind regarding the doctrine we have been considering—the doctrine, viz., of predestination to life.

x. *The Practical Uses of the Doctrine.*

(i.) We must beware of so conceiving this doctrine as to confound it with fatalism. The opponents of Calvinistic opinions are fond of affixing this stigma upon them, as if their views of the divine predestination of believers led to or were identical with this unsound and dangerous system. But though Calvinists may sometimes by using incautious expressions have given some ground for such a reproach, the two doctrines are in reality very distinct. In fatalism God is regarded as the mere instrument of an irresistible and all-embracing necessity; in predestination He is regarded as an absolutely free agent, loving whom He wills, and forming His decrees on reasons of the highest and holiest kind. In fatalism man is regarded as a mere machine, in whom and over whom a rigid unreasoning destiny reigns; in predestination man is regarded as a free agent, every step in the process of whose salvation is taken with his own full consent and in accordance with the laws of his nature. In fatalism each event is viewed as isolated, and as coming to pass simply because the inexorable destiny has brought it about; in predestination each event is regarded as a link in a chain, so that results are connected with instrumentality, effects with causes, ends with means. These differences between the two systems are great and momentous, and not less weighty are the differences between them in respect of practical tendency; for, whilst the former leads a man to lie down in sullen inactivity to await what fate may bring, or makes his working a going against his principles, the latter affords a constant encouragement and stimulus to put forth all his energies to secure worthy and virtuous results. To use means for an end is, on fatalistic principles, a practical absurdity; on the principle of predestination it is a high exercise of wisdom; for on the former hypothesis the end will come whether we use the means or not, on the latter the use of the means is indispensable to the securing of the end. Hence we find in the matter of religion that whilst fatalistic views lead to the

melancholy and oftentimes revolting conclusions of Antinomianism, the doctrines of predestinarianism are usually associated with the zeal, watchfulness, and activity of a vital and sanctifying Christianity. It is a remarkable fact, that of all the nations which have embraced Christianity those in which the doctrines of Calvin have prevailed have been most distinguished for the assiduity with which the people attend upon the means of grace. Nor is this otherwise than what might be expected. If the doctrine taught be that God's predestination of a man to salvation is through the use of means; if it be taught that God's part in this work in no way interferes with man's moral or intellectual freedom, but moves in a sphere which leaves intact and unfettered all man's spiritual energies; if it be clearly laid down that though God may have predestinated a man to eternal life it is only as that man has repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that this life shall be attained, only as he understands and obeys the gospel that he shall obtain the salvation the gospel bestows, only as he adds to his faith all moral virtues and spiritual excellences that he makes his calling and election sure, and only as he follows after holiness that he shall see the Lord,—it is obvious that the only rational conclusion to which any one who receives such a doctrine can come is that it behoves him, if he would be saved, to give all diligence to pursue the course which is thus marked out for him. Teach a man that he shall be saved if elected, whether he use the means or not, or that he shall perish if non-elect however diligently he may use the means, and you at once paralyze his energies, and make him a mere passive instrument in the hands of destiny. But so to teach is to teach another doctrine than that taught by the sacred writers—a doctrine borrowed from the gloomy speculations of heathenism, and which bears no affinity to the luminous and gladdening revelations of Scripture. Let it be our endeavour, therefore, ever to represent to ourselves and to others this Scripture doctrine of predestination unto life in its true scriptural aspect, that it may not only receive no prejudice from our misrepresentation of it, but may come forth in that form in which it is best fitted to exert a beneficial influence on the spiritual interests of ourselves and others.

(ii.) This brings me to a second observation which I would offer on this subject, viz. that it is principally, if not always, in its practical bearings that the apostles bring forward this doctrine in their writings. They do not adduce it as if it had an importance merely *per se*, as a doctrinal position, or as part of a theological system; they bring it forward and dwell upon it as a principle of spiritual vitality, as a motive to spiritual activity, or as a source of spiritual joy and comfort. And this may suggest to us the proper place which this should occupy in our public teaching, and the connection in which it should be introduced. We should refer to it not as a mere piece of speculative theology, but as a great revealed fact having life in it, and potent for good to the soul that believes.

There are those who would have this subject banished from the instruction of the pulpit altogether. They think it calculated to encourage men in indifference or to puff them up with spiritual pride; and they would have the public teacher of Christianity avoid these dangers by practically ignoring those parts of revealed truth which relate to the election of the saints, and to omit all reference to them from his public ministrations. This is by no means a novel feeling; we find it existing in the Church as early as the time of Augustine, as early, that is, as these subjects began to assume a prominent place in the minds of the Christians, and to be discussed under a dogmatical form. "At Marseilles and in other parts of Gaul," writes Hilary of Arles to Augustine, "these are the things that are ventilated, viz. that in preaching it is novel and useless to affirm that some are elected according to purpose, so that they can neither seize nor retain that unless the will to believe be given to them; they think that all vigour of preaching is excluded if nothing be said to have remained in man which may be excited by it." A similar testimony is given by Prosper, a disciple of Augustine, in a letter to him. Now it must be admitted that there is some force in this; for if men are told in one and the same breath that they must believe to be saved, and then that they can be saved only if they are predestinated to be saved, it is obvious that the only effect will be to confuse and perplex the mind of the hearer, and to neutralize whatever effect the proclama-

tion of the gospel may be adapted to produce on him. But whilst there is thus force in the objection, it is force solely as directed against an undue and unsuitable adhibition of the doctrine of election; it has no force as against the teaching of that doctrine in its proper place and in connection with the uses for which it is revealed to us in Scripture. It supplies an emphatic admonition to the public teacher of Christianity to see to it that he rightly divides the word of truth so as to give to saint and sinner each his appropriate portion; it can never be admitted as authorizing or justifying a misprision or keeping back of any part of the revealed counsel of God, the *whole* of which the public teacher of Christianity is bound to declare.

Were the pulpit designed exclusively for the preaching of the gospel to sinners, we might with propriety say that from it the doctrine of election should be excluded, and that upon the principle enunciated by our Lord in reference to this very matter, that we are not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast our pearls before swine. These doctrines belong to the holy; they can be understood and appreciated only by such; and therefore to such alone should they be spoken: the rest can only abuse them, and perhaps injure themselves thereby. But it is not for the proclamation of the gospel to sinners alone that the pulpit has been instituted; nor, we may say, is it for this principally that the Christian ministry to whom the pulpit belongs has been appointed. The first duty of the pastor is to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer; for their comfort, strength, progress, and final triumph he has chiefly to care; and woe unto him if, for the sake of winning those who are without, he keep back or present imperfectly any of those truths which God has revealed especially for their behoof! Of these truths this doctrine of election is one, and to bring it forward in its scriptural simplicity, and for the practical ends which it is adapted to promote, is a very necessary and very profitable part of a pastor's duty.

What these practical ends are I may simply mention.

1. This doctrine should be set forth as a motive to gratitude, the election of any sinner of the human race to spiritual blessings being wholly of grace. 2. As enforcing humility,

seeing not for any worthiness of ours, but solely through sovereignty have we been put in possession of the blessings of redemption. 3. As a strong inducement to piety and practical godliness, seeing it is to these we are elected, seeing it is these God wills us to attain, and seeing it is by these we are to make our calling and election sure; for, as Turretine remarks, "Predestination is not to be viewed *a priori*, but rather *a posteriori*, not so as that we should descend from causes to effects, but that we should ascend from effects to causes; not that we should curiously turn over the book of life to see if our names are inscribed there (a thing not permitted to us), but that we should carefully examine the book of conscience, a thing not only permitted but enjoined, that we may see if we have the seal of God stamped on our hearts, and the fruits of election, to wit, faith and repentance, are to be detected in us; for this is the safest way to the salutary knowledge of this doctrine." 4. As a support under temptation, a consolation under affliction, an anchor of the soul amid the buffetings of that stormy sea over which we have to pass to reach the haven of eternal rest; for, if God be for us, if He have chosen us for Himself to be heirs of salvation, then who can be effectually against us, or what shall separate us from His love?

These are some of the uses to which this doctrine may be applied, and they are such that no pastor who desires the prosperity of his flock, or who would build up the people of his charge in faith and holiness, will lightly neglect to inculcate a doctrine of such fruitful efficacy.

In conclusion, I would observe that in presenting this doctrine to men it is of importance that we should make them clearly understand that what we mean by predestination is that what God does or purposes to be done He has *always* intended and purposed to do, or to permit, or to cause to be done; in other words, that God's acts, whether of performance, or permission, or arrangement, are not the result of caprice or sudden thought or occasioned resolution from something that has come to pass, but are the result of deliberate purpose, according to His good pleasure and for reasons known only to Himself—a purpose which in the case of an eternal and unchangeable Being must of necessity have been from all



eternity. Strictly speaking, there is no decree or ordination, no law or enactment, rendering it a matter of physical necessity that any man should by receiving the gospel be saved, or that any man by refusing it should perish; there is nothing but a wise sovereign purpose on the part of God to show forth His perfections in the salvation of some, while His wrath against sin and His power are showed forth in the destruction of the disobedient and impenitent.

When the doctrine is thus presented it seems impossible for any serious objection to it to arise in the minds of any who really believe that God's agency operates in the matter of man's salvation. If God does anything directly to effect the salvation of an individual, He must have purposed to do it; and with Him this purpose must be sovereign and eternal. And in this, while mercy is showed to the individual, there is no injustice to others. Where all are righteously condemned because of transgression, it is surely no violation of justice if some are, for reasons sufficient to the great Lord of all, delivered from this and put in possession of eternal life, while others are left to endure the penalty they have incurred by sin. If any are disposed to take this ground they must be prepared to go farther and impeach the equity of God, because in His providential dealings with men He distributes favours according to His own good pleasure, setting up one and putting down another, and showing favour to one while others are left destitute of such advantage. The fact that the greatest inequalities exist amongst men is one which cannot be set aside; it stares us in the face whenever we look on the world of men around us. If, then, this fact is compatible with the divine justice and equity, with what reason can it be maintained that there is unrighteousness with God if He distributes the blessings of salvation as a sovereign according to His own good pleasure? God is surely as free to show mercy to one and not to another as He is to send health and prosperity and religious advantages to one and not to all. In this respect the doctrine of election stands on exactly the same footing as the doctrine of providence. "It only assumes that God acts in the dispensation of His grace precisely as He acts in the distribution of His other favours; and all systems which are founded on

the principle that this sovereignty of God is inconsistent with His justice and His parental relation to the children of men, are in obvious conflict with the facts of His providence."<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SOTERIOLOGY.

#### SECOND DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN ITS FULFILMENT.

##### I. THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Of the things which God does *for* His people, and which are manifestations of His special benevolence towards them, we have already considered at some length His gracious purpose to save them from sin and misery—a purpose wholly sovereign, and which had from eternity its place in the divine mind. Now this purpose was really a purpose to exert on them an influence which should lead them to avail themselves of the means provided by the general benevolence of God for the salvation of sinners of the human race; for, as God's purposes and decrees have always a reference to God's own actings, we cannot suppose that His decree to save any one came short of a purpose to put forth a divine energy on that one by which he should be saved. We are thus brought to the subject of divine influence in the salvation of sinners—a subject with which that of predestination is inseparably connected, so that the two stand or fall together.

It is agreed on all hands, that whatever God does in reference to the salvation of individuals is ascribed in Scripture to the agency of the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God. We shall therefore properly enter upon our present subject by an inquiry into the testimony of Scripture concerning the Spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Hodge, *Theology*, ii. 339.

i. *Names given to the Holy Spirit.*

(i.) Let us commence by considering the meaning of the *names* by which this object is designated in Scripture. And here we have, in the first instance, to inquire into the force of the term *Spirit* as used in the Bible.

This term occurs very frequently both in the O. T. and N. T., and it has several varieties of meaning, all of which, however, may be traced back to one fundamental idea. "Spirit," from the verb "spiro," denotes primarily "breath," "air in motion," and from that "wind," and "the breath of animals;" and the same is true of the Greek *πνεῦμα* (from *πνέω*), and the Hebrew רוּחַ. We find both words used in these acceptations in Scripture. Thus in Job i. 19 we read, "and a great wind" (רוּחַ גָּדוֹל); and in John iii. 8 our Lord says, "the wind bloweth where it listeth," etc. (*πνεῦμα*); in both of which passages the word denotes the air of the atmosphere in motion, and so it means in many other passages; comp. *e.g.* Gen. viii. 1; Ex. xv. 10; Ps. i. 4, etc. In Ezek. xxxvii. 5, God says, "Behold, I will cause *breath* to enter you, and ye shall live;" Ps. civ. 29, "Thou takest away their *breath*, they die;" Job ix. 18, "He will not suffer me to take my *breath*," where the word used is רוּחַ, and in many instances besides. So in the N. T. we read in Rev. xiii. 15, "And He had power to give *breath* to the image of the beast," where *πνεῦμα* is used; and in Jas. ii. 26, where we read "the body without breath is dead," the same word is used, though in the A. V. it is translated "spirit." From denoting "breath" these words came by a very natural transition to signify "life," animal life (just as we have *anima* from *ἀνεμος*); for as there is a close connection between breathing and living, and as it seems as if with the last breath the life expires, so the term denoting the former came naturally to be used to denote the latter; see Gen. xlv. 27; Judg. xv. 19, etc. Another step brought it to denote the principle or source of life, the soul, and from that to designate the rational part of man, whether as the seat of affections, or of cognitions, or of purposes. In this last sense it frequently occurs in Scripture, "His spirit was troubled," Gen. xli. 8; "He that hath no rule over his own spirit,"

Prov. xxv. 28 ; "My spirit made diligent search," Ps. lxxvii. 6 ; "The Lord . . . formeth the spirit of man within him," Zech. xii. 1 ; "filled with the spirit of wisdom," etc., Ex. xxviii. 3 ; "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak," Matt. xxvi. 41 ; "whom I serve in my spirit," Rom. i. 9 ; and many other instances. From denoting the inner, the immaterial principle in man, it came to denote generally any immaterial object ; hence it is used to denote a ghost (which we remark in passing is just the Saxon word for spirit), as in Job iv. 15, 16, where Eliphaz says, "A spirit passed before my face," etc. ; and in Luke xxiv. 37, where it is recorded that the disciples, when Jesus, after His burial, suddenly stood in the midst of them, "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." On the same ground it is applied to angels whether good or bad ; thus Heb. i. 7 (in a quotation from Ps. civ. 4), "Who maketh His angels spirits," etc. ; and ver. 14, "Are they not all ministering spirits ?" etc. ; and we read of "unclean spirits," "spirits of wickedness," etc. In the same sense God is said to be a Spirit ; He is not a material essence ; He cannot be subjected to any of the conditions of materialism, or discerned by material organs. It may be partly on this ground that the Holy Spirit receives this designation—the object so designated is not material or sensible. But there is another and perhaps more essential idea involved in this appellation. As the soul or inner nature of man is an active, energetic principle, so the term spirit is sometimes used in the sense of impulsive power, animating force, or vivifying energy. As Samson drank of the waters that sprang out in Lehi, "his spirit came again (*i.e.* the life-power within him was restored), and he revived" (Judg. xv. 19). When Isaiah (xxxi. 3) says of the horses of the Egyptians that they are "flesh and not spirit," the idea is that though Israel foolishly trusted in them they were not trustworthy, being destitute of vigour and power. And in many passages the phrase "spirit of God" is used where the most prominent idea, if not the only idea, intended by the expression is that of the divine power and energy ; as, *e.g.*, "By His Spirit he adorned the heavens"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is a difficulty in construing this verse. The words of the original are בָּרָהוּוּ יְצִמִּים נְפָחָה, which cannot be translated as in our version, because if

(Job xxvi. 13); "all the host of them (the heavens) were made by the spirit of His mouth" (Ps. xxxiii. 6); "the Lord shall consume [the wicked] with the spirit of His mouth," etc. (2 Thess. ii. 8). From this usage in connection with that previously mentioned, in which spirit conveys the idea of an invisible immaterial essence, the term came, I apprehend, to be appropriated to the Holy Spirit, the invisible but mighty agent in man's redemption.

(ii.) From the simple term "spirit" let us now pass on to consider some of those adjuncts by which this term is more clearly defined or more fully described in Scripture. These are found in such phrases as "Spirit of God" or the Lord, "Spirit of Christ," "Holy Spirit," "Spirit of holiness."

1. The phrase "spirit of God" sometimes occurs where there is no reference whatever, or no direct reference, to the Holy Spirit. Thus we read, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; for the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it," where the reference is plainly to a scorching wind (comp. also Hos. xiii. 15). Again, when Job says, "The spirit of God is in my nostrils" (xxvii. 3), he plainly means the breath of life communicated to us by God; and in this sense the phrase repeatedly occurs; and it is probably with reference to this that God is called the "God of the spirits of all flesh," *i.e.* the Giver and Sustainer of life wherever it exists. The phrase is also applied to denote unusual mental endowments, such being regarded as gifts from God; as when Bezalcel is said to have been "filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and understanding, and all service, and workmanship" (Ex. xxxi. 3); or when great feats of arms or wise and able movements in politics are ascribed to men because on them the spirit of the Lord was; in such instances the phrase does not seem to convey more than that the parties in question were endowed with singular natural powers by God. In another class of passages this phrase is used to denote the divine power, or an

נִשְׁפָּרָה be taken as a verb it must be the 3rd pers. sing. fem. of the pret. in Piel of נִשְׁפָּר, to make globular, and cannot therefore have *he* for its subject. Some follow Ibn Ezra in regarding the ב in בְּרוּחוֹ as redundant, and so make רוּחַ the nom. to the verb, translating, "His Spirit garnished the heavens." But this is of doubtful legitimacy. Perhaps the best way is to take נִשְׁפָּרָה as a noun = beauty, and translate, "By His Spirit are the heavens beauty."

exercise of that power, as when the spirit of God is said to be "*poured*" upon men, or men are said "to be filled" with the spirit, or to "reeve" the spirit of God,—phrases which can have no other meaning than that the parties of whom they are used have become the objects of some great and special divine influence. Besides these passages, however, there are others, both in the O. T. and the New, in which the phrase is used in such a way as to suggest that it is a personal existence, a divine agent to which it is applied. Thus we read at the beginning of the Bible that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. i. 2), and a little farther on God is introduced as saying, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. vi. 3). So also we read, "The Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me, and His word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2); "whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" (Ps. exxxix. 7). "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me," or, as it ought probably to be translated, "And now the Lord God hath sent me and His Spirit" (Isa. xlviii. 16); "But they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit" (Isa. lxiii. 10); "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Cor. iii. 16); and many others of like sort. In these passages the language is such as to suggest the probability that it is of a personal existence in some sense that the phrase, "Spirit of God," or of the Lord, is used. It is possible, indeed, to explain them without adopting this hypothesis; and therefore we at present only draw from them an inference as to the probability of it. But that probability we cannot help believing to be strong, from the peculiar form of phraseology employed in these passages. That which moves over a material surface, which strives with men, that speaks, that sends or is sent, that may be vexed, and that dwells in men, presents itself to the mind naturally as a real agent or personal entity. Such language *may* be only highly figurative, and may consequently only describe a power, influence, or tendency; but the first and most natural presumption is that the object to which it is applied is a person.

2. The phrase "spirit of Christ" occurs twice in the N. T.: Rom. viii. 9, "Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" Phil. i. 19, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer and the supply [or

aid] of the spirit of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> In Gal. iv. 6 we have the synonymous expression, "The spirit of His (i.e. God's) Son;" and in Acts xvi. 7, according to the reading of the best MSS., we have the phrase, "the spirit of Jesus."<sup>1</sup> In these phrases the genitive may be taken as either the genitive of possession or the genitive of cause; so that the phrase "spirit of Christ" may denote either the spirit which was in Christ, or the spirit which Christ bestows. So far as these expressions themselves, therefore, are concerned, they determine nothing certainly as to our present object; because whether we take the genitives possessively or causally, the phrase may be held merely to describe a certain state of mind—in the one case of Christ's mind, in the other of His people's mind as influenced by Him. When, however, we look at these phrases in their connection with the context in which they stand, we shall see occasion to attach to them a somewhat different meaning, excepting in the case of Gal. iv. 6, where the statement, "God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," cannot well be understood, especially when compared with Rom. viii. 14–16, otherwise than with reference to the communication to believers of the same spirit that was given to Christ. With this exception, however, the statement just made will be found to hold good. Thus in Rom. viii. 9 the words above quoted follow immediately on the statement, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." In these words there can be no doubt that by the Spirit of God we are to understand the Spirit that God sends or bestows; and when, immediately after this, Paul adds, "Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His," the presumption is that he means the Spirit which Christ sends, and by which His people are made to walk, even as He also walked, not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,—the more especially since we are elsewhere informed that the Spirit that comes to believers proceedeth from, or is sent by, the Son as well as the Father; and since Paul immediately adds, "but if Christ be in you," etc., an expression which shows that he

<sup>1</sup> Οὕτως εἰπὼν αὐτοὺς τὸ πνεῦμα Ἰησοῦ. The Text. Recep. has simply πνεῦμα, but Ἰησοῦ is added in codices A, B, C, D, E, etc., and in several of the ancient versions, including the Vulg. and the Syr.

regarded the having of Christ's Spirit as equivalent to Christ Himself dwelling in us. The Spirit of Christ, therefore, is a Spirit which is distinct from our own spirit, for it is sent to us, and dwelleth in us; distinct also from the spirit or mind which was in Christ, for it is capable of being in us, and whose dwelling in us is equivalent to Christ's being in us. All these considerations suggest the idea of some *personal* existence as here referred to; at any rate, it must be admitted that they fall in with that hypothesis better than any other.

In Phil. i. 19 the phrase "Spirit of Jesus Christ" occurs in connection with an utterance on the part of the apostle of confident expectation that certain circumstances to which he refers would turn to his salvation through the aid of the Spirit of Christ. But that which aids a man must be distinct from the man himself; and the Spirit of Christ sent to aid a man cannot mean the mind or spirit that belongs to Christ Himself. Such phraseology, it is obvious, agrees better with the supposition of a personal agent than any other.

In the passage from the Acts (xvi. 7) this supposition is almost forced upon us from the language in connection with which the phrase in question occurs. "After they were come to Mysia they essayed to go to Bithynia; but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." This language is plainly such as would be naturally employed in speaking of a personal agent; it must strike one at once that not without the utmost violence can the phrase "Spirit of Jesus" here be made to mean either the mind of Christ or the mind which Christ put into His disciples. The language clearly directs us to conceive of some intelligent agent distinct from the parties referred to, and by whom a purposed influence was exerted on them.

3. We come now to consider the appellation most commonly given to the object of our investigation—the Holy Spirit, קדוש קרי, πνεῦμα ἅγιον. This phrase occurs frequently, especially in the N. T., and may be regarded as the proper and special designation of the object to which it is applied. We may expect, therefore, to find from the usage of it the most decisive evidence of the true nature of that object.

Now, discounting one or two instances in which the phrase seems to describe the renewed nature in believers, and one or



two which are of doubtful import, it will be found that this phrase is invariably employed so as to bear a sense applicable only to a personal agent. The instances are too numerous to be examined in detail. I shall therefore confine myself to a few of the more striking.

When our Lord was about to leave His disciples, He, in order to cheer and encourage them, promised to send to them the Holy Spirit, whom He describes as another *παράκλητος*, advocate, helper, or comforter (in the ancient sense of that term as = one who stands beside a man and puts strength in him), and of whom He says that when He "is come He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John xvi. 13). Now, how are we to interpret such language on any other supposition than that it is of a personal agent that it is uttered? Suppose that we understand by the phrase "spirit of truth" here merely a divine influence experienced within the mind of the disciples, with what propriety could this be called *another παράκλητος*, as distinguished from Jesus Christ, a concrete person? or how could this be said to act as a "guide," to "speak," to "hear," and to "show"? and what possible meaning can we attach to our Lord's assertion that this subjective influence was not to speak of Himself, but according as He should hear from others? Such language surely necessitates the conclusion that the object of whom it is used is a personal agent. And in connection with this it is worthy of notice how our Lord uses, in reference to this object, the masculine personal pronouns *ἐκεῖνος* and *αὐτός*, and the relative *ὅς*, throughout this context. Such a usage is grammatically incorrect, and can be accounted for only on the principle of a *constructio ad sensum*. But this presumes that the object denoted by *πνεῦμα* is a person, for only on that presumption will the principle of a *constructio ad sensum* apply. Putting this beside the general tenor of our Lord's statements in this context, we can hardly doubt that when He spoke of the Holy Ghost, He had in His own mind, and meant to convey to the minds of His disciples, the concept of a personal agent.

In Acts xiii. 2 we read, "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate me Barnabas and

Saul for the work wherunto I have called them.'” Here the Holy Spirit appears as selecting and calling men to a particular work, and as commanding the Church to set these men apart as His instruments for that work. What is this Holy Spirit of which such things are said? If it be replied, A divine influence, we ask, In whom? or where? In Barnabas and Saul? But how could an influence within them speak to and command the Church? or how could men be set apart for something that was within themselves? It must be obvious that the simplest and most natural explanation of language like this is furnished by the hypothesis that the Holy Spirit here mentioned is a personal agent, and not a mere influence.

In Acts xv. 28 the exercise of judgment is ascribed to the Holy Spirit: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us,” etc. Does the Holy Spirit here mean a divine influence? If so, will any one tell us what is meant by a particular course appearing good, *i.e.* commending itself to the judgment of a divine influence? Is not this, as Dr. Wardlaw observes, simply “nonsense”? Shall we then say that by the Holy Ghost here we are to understand a subjective state of the apostle’s mind? If so, what, we ask, is the distinction between the Holy Spirit and the “us” to whom as well as to the Holy Spirit the course in question seemed good? Suppose we substitute for the words “the Holy Spirit” what, according to this interpretation, is their equivalent, and read the passage thus: “It seemed good to a subjective state of our minds and to us,” etc., do we not again produce nonsense? How much better at once to follow what common sense dictates, and where an act of judgment is ascribed to an object understand by that object a personal existence to which alone acts of judgment are appropriate—especially when this object is represented as uniting in this act with others who are undoubtedly persons!

In 1 Cor. xii. 11 the Holy Spirit is represented as possessing and exercising *will*: “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as *He will*.” Here we have the Spirit selecting individuals, and conferring upon them miraculous gifts according to His own sovereign will. Can there be a more distinct and undeniable

ascription of personality than this? In what does personality consist, if not in the possession and exercise of will? And if it was in virtue of an act of will on the part of the Holy Spirit that each received the miraculous gift he had to exercise, are we not shut up to the conclusion that the subject in which that will operated is a personal agent?

The same conclusion is pressed upon us by those passages which represent the Holy Spirit as capable of being acted on by men. Such are those passages that speak of the Spirit as being "grieved," being "resisted," being "lied" to, being "tempted," being "blasphemed," and the like. In what special meaning these terms are to be taken it does not fall within our province at present to inquire; it is enough that, mean what they may as respects the *nature* of the effect produced, the mere use of such phraseology in reference to the Holy Spirit is of itself sufficient to show that by this phrase we are to understand a personal agent and not a mere influence. How can one grieve, or blaspheme, or tempt an influence? and though it is possible, certainly, to resist an influence, yet when we read the entire passage in which this expression occurs as applied to the Holy Ghost, we shall see that it is not to any opposition to an internal impulse of the source of which the parties themselves are unconscious, but to the conscious resistance to some command, expressive of the will and authority of another, that the statement relates. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts vii. 51). These words were spoken by Stephen to the Sanhedrin when he stood before them and made his defence. Now to what was it that he referred in making this charge against them? Was it to certain states of their own mind? or to certain mysterious influences exerted on them? Was it not rather to the outward message which had been brought to them by our Lord and His disciples, which they had cast away from them and resisted?—just as their fathers had resisted the messages sent to them by the prophets, as Stephen goes on in the following verses more fully to assert. To resist the Holy Ghost, then, is to treat as false such an objective announcement of truth as Christ, His apostles, and the prophets brought. But how can this be unless of that

announcement the Holy Spirit be the author? Here, then, the Holy Spirit appears as a witness and a teacher who is resisted when His message is set at naught. Is not this most distinctly to ascribe to Him the attributes and qualities of a person?

The comparison of these different statements of Scripture must be sufficient to satisfy us that by the sacred writers the Holy Spirit of whom they speak was by them regarded as a person. There is no criterion of personality which they have not enabled us to apply so as to satisfy ourselves on this point. If intelligence, will, activity, and receptivity be marks of a personal existence, then are all of these so frequently ascribed to the Holy Spirit that we must either regard the sacred writers as singularly incorrect in their use of language, or believe that they themselves regarded and meant their readers to regard the Holy Spirit as a Person. We have, in fact, just the same kind of evidence for the Personality of the Spirit that we have for that of the Divine Being; and so far as the statements of Scripture are concerned, we have that evidence equally explicit for the one as for the other.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### ii. *The Deity of the Holy Spirit.*

Besides proving His Personality, however, some of the passages we have been considering suggest something still higher and more peculiar respecting the Holy Spirit. The very expressions Spirit of God and Holy Spirit carry in them something divine; and if such expressions describe a personal agent, and not a mere power or influence of which God is the cause or source, we can hardly hesitate to call that Person divine. When, moreover, we find this Spirit of God associated with Jehovah the supreme God in counsel and working; when we find this agent exercising His

authority in sending forth prophets and apostles, fitting them for their work, and commanding them what they are to do; when we find ascribed to Him the office of *παράκλητος* or helper of the disciples of Christ, who should supply to them all that His personal presence had supplied; when we find the exercise of a sovereign will ascribed to Him in the dispensation of miraculous gifts; and when we find an offence against Him treated as a sin of the deepest dye,—we are constrained to feel that the Being of whom such things may be said is in nature and dignity far beyond the sphere of creature existence. We are thus led to inquire whether Scripture supplies us with any further and more precise information on this point.

The answer to this inquiry is, that the sacred writers clearly teach that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, and that by the same kind of evidence by which they assure us of the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence for the latter is indeed more copious than the evidence for the former, but it is exactly of the same kind, and therefore not less convincing.

A brief survey of this evidence may be now given.

(i.) Though the Holy Spirit is nowhere expressly called *God* in Scripture, and though none of the peculiar *names* of God are applied to Him, yet in repeated instances the phrase Holy Spirit and Spirit of God is used interchangeably with the term God, and the things which are imputed to the one are imputed also to the other. Take, for example, the language of Peter to Ananias (Acts v. 3, 4); it is evident that to lie to God and to lie to the Holy Ghost are one and the same thing; a position which is tenable only on the supposition that the Holy Spirit is God. In this respect it is of no moment whether we understand the Holy Spirit here as the Spirit of inspiration dwelling in the apostles, or the Spirit dwelling in the Church as the source of purity and illumination. In either case the lie of Ananias was an attempt to deceive the Spirit of God, and this Peter identifies with an attempt to deceive God. These two propositions are capable of being harmonized only on the supposition that the Spirit as a person to whom a lie can be uttered is a Divine Person, is God.

We find a similar collocation in 1 Cor. iii. 16, where St. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" a statement which he repeats (vi. 19) in the form: "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" and again in 2 Cor. vi. 16 he calls believers the "temple of God," who has promised to "dwell in them and be their God." From these statements it is plain that to be a temple of the Spirit and to be a temple of God are one and the same thing; that for the Spirit to dwell in a man or in a Church is the same thing as for God to dwell there; and that it is by God's Spirit making the bodies of believers His temple that God becomes to them in actual manifestation and realized blessedness their God. As these passages cannot be interpreted of a mere effect produced on men's minds by divine power, but relate to the indwelling in man of a personal agency denominated the Holy Ghost, it is obvious that the being so named is identified with God, and therefore must be viewed as a Divine Agent. Whilst, therefore, we cannot, as in the case of our Lord, adduce the *argumentum onomasticum*, the Name-argument, directly in proof of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, we can adduce what is not less cogent, the *interchange* of the term "God" with the phrase "Holy Spirit" as designating one and the same Person, and thereby indicating the Holy Spirit to be God.

(ii.) The divine attribute of omniscience or Infinite intelligence is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit," we read, "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."<sup>1</sup> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Here the Spirit is said to search, *i.e.* explore, become cognizant of the deep things of God, those things which the apostle elsewhere says are "unsearchable, and past finding out,"<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* such as no creative intellect can discover or comprehend. The Spirit is here said also to know the things of God, *i.e.* the thoughts, purposes, plans of God,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. The word rendered "searcheth" is *ἔρυνω*, on which Chrysostom remarks: οὐκ ἀγνοίας, ἀλλ' ἀκριβοῦς γνώσις, ἵνα αὐτὰ τὸ ἔρυναν ἰδεῖται.

<sup>2</sup> ἀνεξερεύνητα τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεξήγηστοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ, Rom. xi. 33.

just as a man's spirit knows, *i.e.* is conversant with the man's own thoughts, purposes, and plans. Such a statement ascribes to the Holy Spirit divine knowledge, such knowledge as God alone can have; for who can penetrate to the unrevealed, unuttered thoughts of God but God Himself? To evade the force of this as an argument for the Deity of the Holy Spirit some have pressed the apostle's analogy here, and have argued that as the spirit of man is simply the man himself as an intelligent being, so the Spirit of God here is not a distinct personality, but only that quality of God by which He is an Intelligence, by which He knows. But this is pressing the apostle's analogy too closely, and gives to his words a meaning not borne out by the context or by the form of his expression. For in the preceding context it is plain that by the Spirit is meant not the divine intelligence, nor simply God as intelligent, but that Agent by whom effects are produced on the minds of men, and by whom the apostles were made to know those things which they revealed to others. "God," says he, "hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit," where by the very form of the phraseology we are constrained to understand by the Spirit an Agency in some sense distinct from God. Besides, had the apostle intended to represent the Spirit of God here as standing in the same relation to God as the soul or intellect of a man stands to the man, he would have made some such addition to the words τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ as he has made to the words τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, viz. τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ. Not only, however, is no such addition made, but in contrast to the πνεῦμα τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ, which belongs to man, the apostle describes God's Spirit as τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, "that which is of [out of] God." As the passage stands, the idea conveyed to the reader naturally is that whilst the spirit of man is that intelligence which is in himself, shut up in him, the Spirit of God is in some sense distinct from Him. The Spirit of man is τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ, that which is in him; the Spirit of God is simply the Spirit which is of God, τὸ ἐκ Θεοῦ. Not unintentionally, surely, is this variety of expression used; and it is of itself sufficient to preclude the interpretation which would make the Spirit of God here either simply God Himself or the soul of the divine substance, dwelling there as the soul of man dwells within his material organism.

"The argument," says Dr. Pye Smith in remarking on this passage, "is from the greater to the less, from the universal to the particular. If the Spirit searches out or is intimately acquainted with ALL things, 'even the deep things of God,' certainly He is able to reveal the entire system of religious doctrine, 'the wisdom of God—the hidden wisdom which God had ordained before the world—the things which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man.' The highest intelligence of creatures must exclaim, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!' But no such inability belongs to the Spirit of God. These infinite depths are all penetrated by Him."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, when the Psalmist says, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" (Ps. cxxxix. 7), he evidently ascribes to the Spirit the same omnipresent omniscience which he ascribes to God. The testimony, however, of this passage is not so decisive, because by "Spirit" here may be meant simply the divine intelligence or pervading power. As, however, the Spirit which created, sustains, and pervades the universe is represented in the O. T. as in some sense distinct from God, we may probably regard this utterance of the Psalmist as a profession of his belief in the omniscience of the Spirit of God as a personal existence.

An undoubted testimony to the Spirit's omniscience is furnished by St. Paul when he says, "The Spirit also maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," and thereby "helpeth our infirmities" (Rom. viii. 26). The Spirit here is undoubtedly the Holy Spirit in His objective personality as distinct from the renewed nature in the believer, and as distinct from God the Father to whom prayer is presented. But if the Holy Spirit so knows our mental and spiritual condition as to come to our help, and intercede for us so as to secure for us blessings we know not for ourselves to ask, then must He possess that knowledge which only God possesses—that faculty which can read the unuttered desires of the soul, yea, which can interpret the unformed wishes and longings of the heart. And when this is affirmed in regard to the people of God at large, there is of necessity ascribed to

<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit*, p. 41.



Him omniscience in the largest and fullest sense, for nothing less is adequate to the mighty task of so knowing all the wants and all the weaknesses of all the people of God throughout the world as properly to represent their case and procure for them that which shall meet their necessities and supply to them the help they need. As it is only a divine Saviour who can so undertake for His people as to procure them acceptance with God, so it is only a divine Intercessor who can so represent them as to bring down upon them blessings such as shall supply their utmost and most peculiar needs. It is Deity on the throne, Deity at the altar, and Deity at the footstool that alone can secure for us full and final redemption.

(iii.) We find boundless power also ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Scripture He is represented as the sovereign Agent in the working of miracles; "all these," says the apostle, speaking of the miraculous gifts in the primitive Churches, "worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11). Repeated instances occur in which acts of a supernatural kind are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. By Him were holy men of old inspired to write the Holy Scriptures; the prophets spake as they were moved by Him; He spake by the prophet; by Him was our Saviour conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary; by Him was our Lord consecrated to His work at His baptism; by Him was He led up to be tempted by the devil in the wilderness; by the power of the Spirit He returned into Galilee; by the Spirit of God He cast out devils; by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself unto God; according to the Spirit of holiness He was declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. By the Holy Spirit men are regenerated and created anew; by Him believers are sanctified, and made to bring forth the fruits of a holy and heavenly life; by Him they are led; by Him they are strengthened with power; and by Him they have all access unto the Father, and are made temples of God, where He delights to dwell. Works like these are repeatedly and distinctly ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Spirit: Are they not of such a kind as only a divine Agent can effect? If they be ascribed to a Power less than divine, is not the

boundary line between the finite and the infinite obscured, and the most certain evidences of divine agency rendered doubtful or altogether invalidated?

Of the passages above cited it is fair to remark that two are susceptible of another meaning than that which refers them to the Holy Spirit. I allude to that in which Christ is said to have been declared the Son of God with power by the "Spirit of Holiness," and that in which He is said to have offered up Himself by the Eternal Spirit. By the *πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης* in the former of these passages some understand the divine nature of Christ as distinguished from that which He derived by descent from David; and the same meaning is also given by some to the *αἰώνιον πνεῦμα* of the latter passage; while others regard the *πνεῦμα* in both cases as describing the heavenly state into which Christ has entered as distinguished from that state in which He appeared here below, and in which He was manifested in the flesh, and died as a sacrifice to be offered within the veil. There is much difficulty connected with the proper interpretation of both passages. On the whole, I think the interpretation which understands them of the Holy Spirit is the one least burdened with difficulties; but as uncertainty hangs over this, it is but fair to allow for this in adducing them for purposes of proof.

(iv.) The Holy Spirit is joined with the Father and the Son as the object of religious worship, as the object of prayer, and as the source of spiritual blessing. The first teachers of Christianity were sent forth to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *i.e.* with a view to the ultimate enjoyment of the revealed truth of the triune God. Now, as Dr. Wardlaw justly observes, "on the very first aspect of this text it seems most unreasonable to suppose that the one true God is here associated with two of His creatures, or with one of His creatures and an attribute, an energy or mode of operation;" and "the unreasonableness," he adds, "is increased when the words are considered as the terms of an initiatory rite connected with a religion in which all worship but that which is addressed to the one Jehovah is, under every form, whether expressed or implied, so decidedly and totally condemned."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on Socinian Controversy*, p. 46.

We find also the apostle conjoining these three in one act of supplication: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. xiii. 14). The support which this passage lends to the doctrine of the *personality* of the Holy Spirit cannot escape the notice of even a cursory reader; for nothing can be conceived more incongruous than the conjunction of two persons with an attribute or quality of one of them in an invocation; nor could any interpretation be more arbitrary than when three objects are invoked together to admit the personality of two of them and deny that of the third. But not less decisively does the passage speak for the Deity of the Holy Spirit, for if it be admitted that the proper object of prayer is God, then the invocation of the Holy Spirit here, especially when that is conjoined expressly in one address with the invocation of God, leads to the conclusion that in the mind of the apostle the Holy Ghost was regarded and revered as a Divine Person.

In the introduction to the Apocalypse we have the following invocation: "Grace unto you, and peace, from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness," etc. (i. 4). By "the seven spirits of God" here the best commentators understand the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, who is thus described according to the style of Oriental symbolism which pervades this book. Farther on in the book (iv. 5) these are expressly called "the seven spirits of God;" and at v. 6 they are represented as in the hand of the Lamb, and sent forth by Him into the whole earth. Now, this proves that these seven spirits are existences or agencies distinct from God Himself, not mere creations of His power, as might, indeed, be inferred from their being collocated with God and Jesus Christ as beings of one kind. This collocation also forbids our regarding them, with some commentators, as angels,—an interpretation which even De Wette rejects, observing that "these seven spirits form, with God and Christ, the primal source of grace and praise, whence it is clear that the threefold representation here corresponds to the Trinity; whilst, on the other hand, the seven angels that stand before God's throne are mere

creatures, servants of the divine will, media and manifestations of the omnipotence that rules the world." The same commentator also explains the use of the phrase seven spirits for the one Holy Spirit, as resting on the symbolical meaning of the number *seven* as the number of *perfection*, and adds, "This holy, perfect number denotes the multiform agency of the Spirit of God." D  sterdieck, one of the latest commentators on the Apocalypse, adopts the same view, and says, "The Spirit cannot, in His essential oneness, be represented either as before the throne of God or as sent into all the earth; therefore there is required the concrete representation which is furnished by the holy number seven, symbolizing the divine fulness; and hence the one Spirit is represented as seven spirits, as elsewhere He is represented as seven eyes and as seven lamps." Here again, then, we have the Holy Spirit joined with the Father and the Son in a solemn act of invocation.

It follows from these passages that to the Holy Spirit divine worship is to be offered and divine honour ascribed, the same as to the Father and to the Son. To give such honour or worship to one not truly divine would be blasphemy or idolatry. But, on the other hand, to withhold this from one whom the Author of our religion and His apostles place on an equality with God as the object of religious respect and worship, cannot be regarded as other than presumptuous, if not impious.

(v.) Scripture represents the Holy Spirit as being sinned against by men. The Israelites were charged by God through the prophet with the sin of rebelling against and vexing His Holy Spirit; our Lord speaks of sin against the Holy Ghost; and Ananias and Sapphira are said to have lied unto the Holy Ghost. Now, that against which man may sin, against which he may rebel, and that to which he may lie, is not only of necessity a person, but must be regarded in the cases specified as a Divine Person. For though one may by misconduct vex and rebel against a creature, when God says that men have rebelled against and vexed His Holy Spirit, we cannot suppose for a moment that any creature is intended. God's Holy Spirit must be something *divine*; and if it is not a mere divine attribute or energy, but a person, it follows that

the being of whom this language is used is a Divine Person. Again, it is quite possible to blaspheme a creature; but when it is said that blasphemy of the Holy Ghost is a sin so enormous that it cannot be forgiven, we are shut up to the conclusion that the Being against whom this sin is committed is none else than God. We may not be able to determine precisely what the sin against the Holy Ghost is, but we may be certain that a sin involving such unparalleled guilt cannot be committed against any being inferior to God. And, in fine, as the lie which Ananias and his wife told to the Holy Ghost is so expressly said by the apostle to have been a lie unto God, for, said he, "thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," there can be no doubt that the Holy Spirit is here represented as a truly Divine Person.

(vi.) The Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as the author of spiritual gifts to men. We have already noticed that He is conjoined with the Father and the Son in this respect, and from this conjunction we have drawn an argument in favour of the Spirit's Deity. But, apart from this conjunction, there is in the mere fact itself that He is the author of spiritual blessings to men evidence of His being divine. For no being can confer spiritual blessings and gifts but God; and consequently when it is stated that these are bestowed by the Holy Spirit, we are bound to conclude that the Holy Spirit to whose action they are ascribed, if not a mere divine energy, is really and truly God. But that it is not of a mere divine energy that this is said is evident from what the apostle, in writing on this subject, says as to the agency of the Spirit in this matter: "Distributing," says he, "to each severally as He wills." Mere energy operates as it is directed by the being who possesses it; that which exercises will and acts according to purpose must be a Person. It follows that the Holy Spirit, who distributes divine gifts according to His own will, must be a Divine Person.

Such is a summary of the evidence from Scripture on which we receive the doctrine of the divine personality of the Holy Spirit. Of the passages cited there are some which undoubtedly are capable of being interpreted so as not to involve that doctrine; but to adduce these in order to disprove the doctrine is as absurd as it would be in a court of

law to adduce a number of witnesses whose testimony was ambiguous to upset the evidence of witnesses whose testimony was clear, distinct, and full. The case stands thus: In some passages the phrase Holy Spirit is used so that it may be equally well understood either of a Person or of an Influence or Power; in a number of other passages it is used where it can be understood only of a Person. On the principle, therefore, of the Inductive Logic, that that which alone accounts for *all* the phenomena is to be accepted as the true cause, we conclude that the interpretation which alone applies to all the passages in which the Holy Spirit is spoken of is the true one, and that consequently we are to receive His true and proper Deity as a truth taught us in Scripture.

(vii.) Two objections to the Deity of the Holy Spirit may be noticed.

1. An objection has been adduced against the doctrine to which we are thus brought, drawn from the fact that in Scripture so little is said of the adoration or worship of the Spirit. In reply to this, it may suffice to say that the conjunction of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son as the object of prayer, already referred to, as much implies the offering of worship to the Spirit as if He had been alone invoked. It may indeed appear at first sight strange that, supposing the Spirit to be a Divine Person, there should be no injunctions in Scripture to pray to Him or to worship Him, and no instances recorded in which acts of devotion were addressed to the Holy Spirit apart from the Father and the Son. But whilst the absence of these cannot invalidate the evidence arising from the actual invocation of Him along with the Father and the Son, the fact itself may be accounted for by the position which the Spirit occupies in the work of redemption. In this work it is the special office of the Spirit to carry on the work of grace in the souls of the saints, and, among other things, to aid them to pray, so that they shall ask as they ought the things that they need. According to the representation of Scripture, we pray to the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; and hence the Spirit, being brought before us thus markedly as the divine Author or Source of true prayer, there is an obvious reason why He should not also be prominently brought before us as the Being

to whom prayer is to be addressed. In the economy of grace the Father appears as the Divine Source of all blessing; the Son as the Divine Mediator, through whom all blessing flows from God to men; and the Spirit as the Agent in men by whom man is prepared to receive the blessing, is led to seek it, and has it effectually applied to his heart. It is obviously in keeping with this that the Father should principally be set before us in Scripture as the Being to whom we are to direct our prayers; the Son less so; and, least of all, the Spirit. But it does not follow from this that the Spirit is not the proper object of devotion, and may not be directly invoked, any more than it follows that we may not pray directly to Christ, or offer directly to Him our worship.

2. Another objection that has been urged against the doctrine of the Spirit's true and proper Deity is, that He is represented as proceeding from the Father and the Son, and as sent by them; whence, it is argued, He must be inferior to them and subordinate. To meet this objection, recourse has been had to a mysterious doctrine of the eternal procession or spiration of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, by which it is held that the Spirit eternally originated from the essence of the Father and Son, so as to be in essence one with them, and, by consequence, equal to them essentially. Without at present instituting any inquiry into this doctrine, though I shall come to consider it presently, I would only now observe, as to the point before us, that, even admitting this to be a Scripture doctrine, it only half meets the objection; for though the procession of the Holy Ghost be understood to mean His eternal origin from the Father and Son,—though we may swallow the self-contradiction of an origin which was never begun,—there will still remain the difficulty arising from the Spirit's being *sent* by God and *given* by Him. This obviously cannot be referred to an eternal process, but must be viewed as something which took place in time; and the question therefore still presses on us, Does this representation of the Spirit as *sent* by the Father and the Son present a real difficulty in the way of our believing the Spirit to be divine, one in essence and equal in glory with the Father and Son? To this question a satisfactory answer may, I think, be given; and the answer which suffices for this will suffice

also for the question about the bearing on our present topic of the *procession* of the Holy Ghost. The sending of the Spirit and the procession of the Spirit I regard as one and the same act presented under different aspects. In the former we have the subjective side of the same truth as that of which the latter gives the objective side; as a free agent the Holy Spirit proceeds, goes forth (*ἐκπορεύεται*) from the Father and the Son; under another aspect He is sent forth by them.

Now it cannot be denied that the sending of the Spirit by the Father and Son implies, in some sense, that the Spirit is subordinate to the Father and the Son. But it does not necessarily follow that this subordination is essential, for it may be merely official; and in this case it may be maintained that the Spirit is equal in essence to the Father and the Son, and yet subordinate to them in the economy of redemption. Even among men, official subordination in combination with natural and essential equality is so common as to be one of our most familiar experiences. Now Scripture teaches us that it is so with the three Persons of the Trinity; in essence they are one and equal, whilst in the economy of redemption they are officially diverse and unequal. The Father is officially superior to the Son; the Father and the Son are officially superior to the Spirit; and yet all three are of one essence, and equal in power and glory. This, it is true, is a great mystery, but it is mysterious only as all facts concerning the divine nature and attributes are mysterious. To the inductive inquirer it is no objection to a fact that it is mysterious, and when two facts are made known to him which he cannot combine under one general statement, that becomes to him the most acceptable hypothesis which allows both their proper authority and weight, which does not sacrifice one to the other. This is the course we follow in the case before us. Scripture reveals the Deity of the Holy Spirit, and, consequently, His equality with the Father and the Son. Scripture also reveals the Spirit's subordination to the Father and the Son. We harmonize these statements without detracting from either of them by the hypothesis that, whilst the equality is essential, the subordination is merely official.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

iii. *The Relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son :  
The Procession of the Spirit.*

What has been advanced may serve for a reply to the objection which has been adduced against the doctrine of the true and proper Deity of the Holy Spirit. It will be necessary, however, that we should go a little farther into the consideration of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the other two Persons in the One Godhead.

This relation may be regarded either as immanent in respect of essence or transient in respect of function. In regard to the former, the doctrine to which I have already adverted, commonly known as that of the procession of the Holy Ghost, has been held as part of catholic orthodox Christianity. To this, therefore, I must now direct your attention.

(i.) *History of the Dogma.*

In the creed called Athanasian this doctrine is thus briefly expressed: "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding." In the creed adopted by the Council at Constantinople in A.D. 381, the language used is less definite: "I believe . . . in the Holy Spirit, Lord and life-giving, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, with the Father and the Son together, is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets;" and in the Nicene Creed, of which the Constantinopolitan is only an expansion, it is only said, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." In the writings of the Fathers, also, the farther back we advance the less do we find of definite traces of this doctrine. Origen seems to have had very confused views on the subject of the Holy Spirit's relation to the Father and the Son. Whilst in some parts of his writings he seems to recognize the perfect equality of the three Persons in the Trinity, in others he

writes as if he believed that the Spirit was formed by the Son, and was inferior to Him. Thus, after referring to some who thought that as all things were made by the Word, the Spirit must have been made by Him, and to others who contended that the Spirit was unbegotten, he professes his own belief thus: "We, however, being persuaded that there are three hypostases, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and believing that nothing is unbegotten but the Father, hold it most pious and true that of all things made by the Word the Holy Spirit is the most honourable."<sup>1</sup> Jerome, referring to the opinions of Origen, says, "Though he says he knows not whether the Spirit be made or not made, he afterwards expresses what was his own opinion, asserting that nothing, excepting the Father alone, is not made."<sup>2</sup> Tertullian gives expression to more definite views; he asserts the doctrine of the Trinity, but holds that both the Son and the Spirit are emanations from the Father, though in substance equal with Him.<sup>3</sup> In Irenæus, Justin Martyr, etc., we find little that enables us to judge of the views they held regarding the Spirit; in some places they seem to confound the Logos and the Pnenma; in others, to represent them as distinct; in all, however, the idea of the Spirit's derivation from the Father may be found more or less clearly enunciated. After the Council at Nice, and chiefly through the writings of Athanasius, the whole doctrine of the Trinity acquired a more precise and definite form; and it is after that that we find the dogma of the procession of the Spirit becoming distinctly recognized and enunciated as a Church dogma. Thus Gregory Nazianzen says, "Deity is common to all; what is peculiar to the Father is the being unbegotten, to the Son the being begotten, to the Spirit the being sent forth."<sup>4</sup> And still more clearly Augustine says, "I hold most firmly, and by no means doubt, that the Holy Spirit, who is the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, proceeds from the Father and the Son. For the Son saith, When the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father has come,—where He teaches that this is His Spirit, because He is truth. That the Spirit proceeds from the Son is also taught by the doctrine of the prophets and the

<sup>1</sup> In Joann. apud Huetii *Origeniana*, t. ii. p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* 59, *ad Arrium*.

<sup>3</sup> See *adv. Praxeam*, 2 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Orat.* xxv. 16.

apostles.”<sup>1</sup> Even in Augustine’s mind, however, this dogma does not appear to have been definitively settled, for we find him in one of his treatises opening the question, whether in saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father it is intended that the Father is a source or beginning for the Spirit; and this he answers by distinguishing between a beginning of what is made and a beginning of what is given. “And here,” he says, “it becomes clear how it can be that the Holy Spirit is not also the Son, since He also came forth from the Father, as it is said in the gospel. For the Spirit came forth not as *born*, but as *given*, and therefore is not called Son, because He was neither born like the Only-begotten, nor made so as that He might become a son by adoption, as with us.”<sup>2</sup> This language seems almost to indicate that both as to the Sonship of Christ and as to the procession of the Spirit, Augustine held that these distinctions do not appertain to the divine essence, but were rather economical, having reference to the manifestation of the Son and the Spirit in the work of redemption, or in this world. The dogma, however, of the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son became gradually more and more firmly established in the Latin Church, especially after the controversies about the insertion of the word “*Filioque*” in the creed, and the final severance of the Latin from the Greek Church, by the latter of which the dogma of the procession of the Spirit from the Father alone, by or through the Son, was tenaciously held. Through the schoolmen the doctrine of the Latin Church on this head passed to the theologians of the Reformation, and has found its place in most systems of theology since. In the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England it is inserted thus: “The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.” In the Confession of Faith drawn up by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and adopted as the Confession of the Church of Scotland, the doctrine is stated more precisely thus: “In the Unity of the Godhead there be Three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceed-

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide ad Petrum*, c. xi.<sup>2</sup> *De Trinit.*, l. v. c. 15.

ing; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son." To these I may add the following statements of the doctrine by divines of eminence. Hollaz: "The hypostatic character of the Holy Spirit is the *spiratio passiva*, or procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, *i.e.* the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit by which He is produced within the bosom of Deity by the Father and the Son, by the communication of one and the same essence numerically, as the common breathing of both." "This spiration," he further says, "is not external, as was the breathing of Christ on His disciples (John xx. 22), but internal and immanent, since it took place within the bosom of Deity; not transitory or evanescent, as is that of breathing men, but eternal and permanent, because the Holy Spirit proceeds from eternity, as the breath of the Almighty (Job xxxiii. 4), and the Spirit of the mouth of the Lord (Ps. xxxiii. 6); not an accidental spiration, but a substantial, for on God there falls no accident, nor can the Holy Spirit as a divine substance and person be produced by an accidental act." Turretine: "As to the Son is ascribed *γέννησις*, to the Holy Spirit is ascribed *ἐκπόρευσις*, or procession, not only in a wide sense of the word as if it denoted origin from some one, for in this sense it might be used as well of the Son, to whom *ἐξοδος* and *ἐξέλευσις* are attributed when it is said that He came out from the Father (John xvi. 28), and had eternal goings forth (Mic. v. 2); but strictly in that it denotes emanation from the Father and the Son, distinct from the generation of the Son. The question is not as to a temporal and external procession which terminates on creatures, by which the Spirit is sent to sanctify us and to complete the work of salvation; but concerning a procession eternal and internal, which terminates on what is within, and is nothing else than a mode of the communication of the divine essence, by which the third Person of the Trinity has the same essence numerically from the Father and the Son as the Father and the Son have."<sup>1</sup>

These extracts will give you a correct conception of this doctrine as held by divines. The slight sketch of the history of the dogma I have given may also be of use as showing

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, i. 399.

how what was probably at first a mere misinterpretation of a passage of Scripture, became by mere dint of reiteration a theological dogma, the holding of which is declared to be essential to salvation. We shall find on examination on what a merely apparitional basis of Scripture authority it rests.

In the extract from Turretine above given, that eminently perspicacious writer distinguishes between a procession of the Spirit which is temporal and external, and has for its object an operation of the Spirit on creatures, and a procession internal and eternal which terminates within the divine essence, and has relation purely to the mode of communication of the divine essence from the Father and Son to the Spirit.

(ii.) *Objections to the Dogma.*

It must strike one at the outset that in the very mooted of such a question there is a transgression of the limits within which theological speculation can alone be safely or legitimately pursued. We may competently inquire as to the revealed *facts* concerning God; but as to the mode of the divine being and essence, as nothing has been revealed to us, and as we are not able to comprehend anything, it is unwise and unlawful for us to inquire or speculate. We receive and uphold as a fact the truth that God is, but how God is we do not know and never can discover. We receive as a fact that in Jesus Christ the divine and human natures are united; but how this is we cannot tell and may not inquire. We receive as a fact that in the divine essence there are distinctions corresponding to the outward distinctions in the economy of redemption of Father, Son, and Spirit; but in what these distinctions consist, or how they are reconcilable with the divine unity, we cannot tell and have no means of knowing. Now, this question of the procession of the Holy Ghost is a question avowedly as to the mode of the divine existence, or as to the mode of the being of the Trinity. It lies, therefore, beyond the limits of legitimate inquiry, and to pursue it will only land us in a confession of incompetency or in a darkening of counsel by words without knowledge. That in reality they know nothing about it is amply confessed

by some who have been most earnest in asserting the dogma. It is a *πρόσδος ἀρρήτος*, says Gregory Nazianzen;<sup>1</sup> "We have learned," says John of Damascus, "that there is a distinction between being begotten and proceeding, but not at all what is the mode of the difference;"<sup>2</sup> "There is a difference," says Augustine, "between generation and procession, but I know not how to distinguish, because both are unspeakable."<sup>3</sup> The schoolmen, less wise or less reverent than their predecessors the Fathers, made attempts to reduce this distinction to terms; but, as Turretine says, their attempt rather perplexed than explained the matter. Turretine himself says, "What the distinction may be cannot be explained and had best be ignored;" and a recent Roman Catholic theologian of great eminence, Dr. Heinrich Klee, says of the Spirit, "He proceeds in a manner to us unknown and not to be more closely characterized, to be simply called Procession or Spiration."<sup>4</sup> But one is naturally led to ask, If it be so, why make a dogma of this at all? why attempt to define what is thus avowed to be incomprehensible? We may also ask, If the mode of the Spirit's procession be inscrutable, is it not something like a contradiction in terms for Turretine nevertheless to propose to inquire into this mode of the communication of the divine essence? Another thing that must strike the inquirer is that this dogma not only enunciates what is incomprehensible, but it sins against one of the fundamental laws of thought or (to use Sir Wm. Hamilton's words) "conditions of the thinkable," viz. the law of non-contradiction. For it virtually affirms and denies the same character of the same object, by positing the true and eternal deity of the Spirit, and yet asserting that the Spirit is as to essence an emanation from the Father and the Son. One is surprised that a man like Turretine should use such a contradiction in terms as to speak of an "eternal procession." Surely that from which any thing or being proceeds must have existed prior to the procession; and if the Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son, the Father and the Son must have existed before the procession of the Spirit commenced. How then could that be eternal? How could that which began to be after the

<sup>1</sup> *Orat.* xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Expos. Fidei Orthod.*, iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Cont. Maxim.*, iii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Katholische Dogmatik*, Bd. ii. p. 186.

Father and the Son have, like them, existed from all eternity? Such a dogma is plainly unthinkable, and should therefore be relegated to the region of the unasserted. Let no one say, It is a mystery and therefore must be believed, though it cannot be comprehended. This is not the case; the objection I am now urging is that there is no mysterious fact here announced, but a plain and very discernible contradiction in terms. My objection is, not that I am asked to believe a fact which I cannot explain, but that I am asked to think what by the laws of human thought is unthinkable. A dogma is not a fact; it is the theory or explanation of a fact; and if it be so constructed as to involve a contradiction in terms, no human mind can possibly receive it. We do but deceive ourselves with words when we confess dogmas which by the laws of thought it is impossible for us to think. But, it may be said, does not our Lord Himself expressly teach that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father? and are we not bound, therefore, to accept this doctrine, however it may seem to contradict our natural reason? To this I would reply, on the one hand, that as the Lord never requires of us that we should do what it is impossible for us to do, it is in the highest degree improbable that He should have asked us to accept any doctrine which contradicts our natural reason, and which, consequently, it is impossible for us to receive; and, on the other hand, that though it is undoubtedly true that our Lord in speaking of the Holy Spirit uses the expression "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father" (John xv. 26), and that consequently we must in some sense hold a procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father; yet as our Lord does not say that this relates to an emanation of the Spirit from the substance of the Father, nor that the procession was internal and eternal, we are left at full liberty to inquire whether these dogmas of theologians are sustained by His words. Now, Turretine admits that there is a procession of the Holy Spirit which is temporal and external, and which has reference to His being sent for the carrying on of the work of God in men's souls; and the question may be fairly asked, whether it is not to this and this only that our Lord here refers. That it is so can hardly, I think, admit of any reasonable doubt. Our Lord when He used these words

was conveying to His disciples an assurance that though He was about to leave them He would send to them another Paraclete, even the Spirit of Truth, which, says He, "proceedeth or goeth forth (*ἐκπορεύεται*) from the Father." Is not the natural interpretation of these words that as it was from the Father, as the source of all blessing, that our Lord Himself came forth, so the Spirit whom He should send would also come forth from the Father? Without this He could not have supplied the place of Christ to the disciples, nor been to them the Spirit of all truth in whose teaching and guidance they could implicitly confide. If it be said that had this been our Lord's meaning He would have used the future and not the present tense, He would have said, "The Spirit of truth which shall proceed from the Father," not "the Spirit of truth which proceedeth," etc., a form of expression which seems to indicate some personal quality or characteristic, and not a single act in which the Spirit was to be the agent; I reply that there is no need to suppose our Lord's words to refer either to a single act or to a personal quality or essential characteristic, for the present tense is constantly used in Scripture to express action which is continual and habitual, so that the force of the present tense in the case before is that not once only, but habitually, the Holy Spirit, when He comes forth, proceeds from the Father. I may add that by all the best interpreters this verse is held as referring, not to the essence, but to the advent or appearance of the Holy Spirit as sent forth by Christ.<sup>1</sup> The Holy Spirit as a Divine Agent goes forth, whilst at the same time in economical subordination to the Father and the Son He is sent forth; comp. John xiv. 16, 26; Gal. iv. 6. It may be also observed that, while this passage does not give any real support to the dogma of the essential procession of the Spirit from the Father, it is directly opposed to the dogma of the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son; for, as our Lord is speaking here of what He was to do for His disciples after He had gone to the Father, the procession of the Spirit from Him can only mean that which took place in time, when after His ascension the promise of the Father was fulfilled to them.

<sup>1</sup> So De Wette, Meyer.



The passage we have been considering is that on which the advocates of this dogma chiefly rely for its support; but they also sometimes try to strengthen this by other reasons. Thus they appeal to the use of such phraseology applied to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit from God," "the Spirit of Christ." But it is easy to see that from such phraseology no argument can be drawn for either side in this question, inasmuch as it is equally appropriate whether we regard the Spirit as essentially proceeding from the Father and the Son, or as economically sent forth by them; in either case the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, of God the Father and God the Son.

An argument has also been drawn from the use of the term *Spirit* as applied to the third Person in the Trinity. Among the scriptural grounds adduced by Dr. Hodge is, "the signification of the word Spirit. It means breath, that which proceeds from and which gives expression and effect to our thoughts." On this I remark 1. that it proves nothing as to the point now in hand, for at the utmost it only would indicate the fact of procession without determining whether that procession be essential or only economical, from all eternity or only in time. 2. An argument based on the etymological sense of a term must necessarily be very precarious, for words are seldom used in their etymological meaning; they speedily acquire secondary senses in which they are commonly used; so that the last thing on which a theologian should seek to base a theological dogma is the etymological meaning of a word. The word "spirit," like the Hebrew רוּחַ and the Greek πνεῦμα, undoubtedly originally meant *breath*; and in this sense it occurs in a very few instances in Scripture. But as generally used there it denotes something which is immaterial as opposed to that which is visible and tangible. In this sense our Lord says, "God is a Spirit,"—an immaterial Being whom we can neither see nor touch; and in this sense also it is applied to the third Person of the Trinity as manifested and working in the economy of redemption. To argue from the application to Him of this term that He proceeded or was breathed forth from the Father and the Son, is no less absurd than it would be to argue from our Lord's

words that God Himself was breathed forth from some other being.

Dr. Hodge further argues that "since Father and Son as applied to the first and second Persons of the Trinity are relative terms, it is to be assumed that the word Spirit as the designation of the third Person is also relative." Here again this able divine adduces an argument which does not touch the question really at issue; for allowing that the word Spirit is a relative term, like Father and Son, it is still open to inquiry whether the relation be an essential or only an economical one. I believe that all these designations are economical, that is, they express the distinctions in the Godhead as these are manifested in the work of redemption, not as they exist in the essence of the Godhead, concerning which we have no revelation, and for which we have no names. But, be this as it may, even if we allow that the terms Father and Son, which do express relation, are designations of the essential relations between the first and second Persons of the Trinity, it surely does not follow that the term Spirit, which does not express relation, must have that meaning forced on it merely because it stands by the side of Father and Son in the designation of the Trinity. Never, perhaps, was there a theological dogma, extensively received, which rested on so narrow a basis as that we have been considering; and certainly never was there one more entirely unsupported by the basis on the narrow pedestal of which its advocates have tried to rest it. It is a dogma to which Scripture gives not a shadow of support, and which reason refuses to receive as self-contradictory and therefore unthinkable.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Wardlaw's *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 54 ff., and Stowell's *Congregational Lecture on the Work of the Spirit*.

## CHAPTER IX.

## II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

## (I.) THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN NATURE.

In considering the relation of the Holy Spirit to the other Persons in the Trinity, the conclusion at which we arrived is that of their essential and hypostatical relation we know nothing; and that it is only of their relation as manifested in the world or in the economy of redemption that it is competent for us to discourse. Under this aspect the Father appears as representing the Godhead, as the Source of all being and blessing, as the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and as the Author of all the purposes which determine events; the Son appears as the great Mediator between God and the world, as the Creator and Upholder of all things, as the Revealer of the Invisible God, and especially as the Reconciler of God and man, through whose work and merits God's purposes of grace towards our fallen race take effect; and the Spirit appears as carrying out the works thus purposed and secured, co-operating with the Son in His special work, and under Him completing and perfecting all that the Father purposed. Basil the Great, in writing of the creation of angels, tersely expresses these external relations of Father, Son, and Spirit thus: "In the creation of these, recognize the Father as the preparing cause, the Son as the creative cause, the Holy Spirit as the completing cause."<sup>1</sup> To the same effect Gregory of Nyssa says: "Every energy extending from God to the creation, and named according to the manifold intents, comes forth from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed by the Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

We are thus brought from considering the Person to consider the Work of the Holy Spirit. And as all the works of God are either in nature or in redemption, we have to con-

<sup>1</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Ablabium*. Quoted by Owen, *Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit*. Works, vol. iii. p. 94.

sider, first, the work of the Holy Spirit in nature, in the world, or in the old creation; and, second, the work of the Holy Spirit in the economy of grace, in the spiritual kingdom, or in the new creation.

In Scripture the Spirit is represented as the operative cause of all created existence. "By His Spirit," we read, God "hath garnished the heavens" (Job xxvi. 13); when the earth lay in a state of chaos the Spirit of God moved on the face of the deep, and communicated to the inert and formless mass a vivifying power (Gen. i. 2). Job, speaking of his bodily frame, said, "The Spirit of God hath made me" (xxxiii. 4). The Psalmist says of all living things, "Thou [God] sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created" (Ps. civ. 30). Isaiah says it is not until "the Spirit is poured from on high" that the "wilderness becomes a fruitful field," etc. (xxxii. 15). And as the Spirit is the operative cause of natural existence and life, so is He the operative cause of intellectual and spiritual life. "There is a spirit in man," says Elihu in Job (xxxii. 8); "and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Extraordinary mental endowments by which men were fitted for extraordinary work are also in Scripture ascribed to the Spirit. Bezaleel was "filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning [artistic] works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass" (Ex. xxxi. 2-4). By God's Spirit being upon him, Moses was fitted for the duties of the high and difficult post which he had to occupy; and when he was enjoined to devolve part of these duties on the seventy elders, God said, "I will take of the Spirit that is on thee, and will put it upon them" (Num. xi. 17). When God gave the command to appoint Joshua to succeed Moses as the leader of the people, He said, "Take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit," etc. (Num. xxvii. 18). In the history of the Judges it is again and again said that the Spirit of the Lord came on individuals, who were thereby qualified for the work to which they were called. To Saul as king of Israel the Spirit was given that he might rule well and wisely; and when he became self-willed and regardless of the authority of God, the Spirit of God, we are told, departed from him (1 Sam. xvi. 14). When

Samuel anointed David to be king, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward" (1 Sam. xvi. 13); and so essential to him as king did David feel the presence with him of God's Spirit to be, that when he was brought to a sense of his great guilt, humbled himself before God, and pleaded for forgiveness, his prayer was, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. . . . Uphold me with Thy free Spirit" (Ps. li. 11, 12), for only through the presence with him of God's Spirit could he teach transgressors God's ways. In all these instances it is to the Spirit's operations within the natural sphere, independent of His agency in the work of redemption, that reference is had.

As the Creator and life-giving Spirit, the Holy Ghost operated on the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was by the Holy Ghost that He was conceived of the Virgin Mary; it was by the Holy Ghost that He was endowed with those gifts by which He discharged His office on earth (Isa. lxi. 1, xlii. 1, xi. 1, 2; John i. 32, iii. 34); it was by the Spirit that our Lord wrought miracles (Matt. xii. 28; Acts x. 38); it was by the Spirit He was quickened and raised from the dead (Rom. viii. 11); and it was by the Spirit that He went and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 19). In the Church of Christ also the Spirit is the operator, not only of miraculous effects, but also of those intellectual endowments by which men are enabled to teach and edify believers; though this belongs rather to the next part of this subject.

## (II.) THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION.

We have now to consider the work which the Holy Spirit carries on in men in the economy of grace.

As a comprehensive summary of the whole truth on this head, we may cite our Lord's words to His disciples when He gave them the promise of the Holy Spirit as a Paraclete to be with them always: "He," said He, "shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 14). According to this, the grand work of the Spirit is to glorify Christ. For this purpose He has been

sent to the Church, and for this purpose He abides with the Church. As our Lord came into the world to glorify the Father, and ere He left it could say, "I have glorified Thy name;" so the Spirit came to glorify Christ, and this belongs to Him as His special part in the work of redemption.

This end, our Lord further intimates, the Spirit is to pursue by taking of His and showing it unto His people. By τὸ ἐμὸν here our Lord means His truth, the truth He had Himself taught, the truth of which God is the substance, the whole body of divine truth which constitutes Christianity a system of doctrine, and by which Christianity as a religion is to lay hold on the minds and hearts of men. This our Lord claims as His, on the ground, as He goes on to say, that all things that the Father hath are His; what belongs to God as the Author of all truth belongs also to Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3). Hence, in establishing the Church, and carrying forward His work as the Church's abiding Paraclete, the Spirit has only to take of those treasures which are hid in Christ, and unfold, declare, or manifest them to men. "The Spirit, therefore, which proceedeth from the Father has Christ as the basis, the sum, the end of all His working, and all progress in the Church in knowledge consists only in a greater sinking into Christ, a deeper, more comprehensive apprehension of Christ, and all growth in holiness in a larger and fuller representation of the image of Christ. The Alpha and Omega alike for the Spirit and the Church is Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Now, in carrying forward this work of glorifying Christ by declaring the truth of God in Him to men, the Spirit has followed different methods, according to the circumstances of individuals, and of the immediate ends to be answered by their being led into all the truth. Where a person was called, as in the primitive time, to proclaim the message concerning Christ unto others, the Spirit operated on his mind so as to give him supernatural apprehension of the truth, and supernatural powers of communicating it to others. Where a man who knew the truth was called on to commit that truth to writing for the instruction and edification of the Church in all coming time, the Spirit qualified him for this

<sup>1</sup> Luthardt, *Das Johan. Evangel.*, ii. 345.

by inspiring him, so as that he put down in writing, with unerring accuracy, according to the mind of God, what he was called to write. When the truth has to be presented to the mind of an individual so as that he shall experience its saving, comforting, and sanctifying effects, the Holy Spirit accomplishes this end by so operating on the man's mind that it is opened to receive the truth, and inclined to yield to its influences. Viewed in relation to the first two of these, this promise may be regarded as applying to the apostles officially as the commissioned ambassadors of Christ to men, and as conveying to them, and to all who should be associated with them in revealing God's truth to men, that divine aid without which their work could not be successful. Viewed in relation to the last of these, this promise may be regarded as conveying to the apostles for themselves as sinners needing salvation, and for all to whom their message should come, such aid as is necessary for their profiting by the truth as it is in Jesus—so far, at least, as it is in God's decree or purpose that such profiting should be secured to any. The distinction here pointed out is commonly designated a distinction between the extraordinary and transient work of the Spirit and the ordinary or abiding work of the Spirit.

Of the extraordinary operations of the Spirit, were those shown in the bestowment of the spiritual gifts<sup>1</sup> described in 1 Cor. xii. 8–10 and 28. To examine them does not fall within my province at present. But, keeping in view the statement in Scripture that the Holy Spirit was sent forth to declare the truth concerning Christ, it is necessary that we should consider that special and extraordinary work which the Spirit accomplished in inspiring men to commit to writing truths by the reception of which men become wise unto salvation.

#### i. EXTRAORDINARY OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT—*Inspiration*.

Whatever benefits might be derived from the miraculous gifts exercised by individuals in the primitive Churches, it must be apparent that something more was demanded for

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Alexander's article on "Spiritual Gifts," in Kitto's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, vol. iii.

the wants of the Church as a permanent institution. The establishment of the fact of God's presence in and with His Church, and, in connection with this, the divine authority of the truth on which the Church is based and of which it is the conservator which these gifts tended to evince and confirm, is indeed a boon for the Church in all times and places. But for the Church's edification, nay, for its very sustenance and continued existence, it was needful that the instructions which, through the medium of these supernatural endowments, the primitive Church received, should be embodied in some permanent form, so as to be a possession and heritage for the Church in all times. Now, there are only two ways in which this could be done; the one is by committing to the Church an oral record of divine things to be handed down from generation to generation; the other is by committing to writing what of religious truth and fact it concerns men to know, and entrusting this to the safe keeping of the Church, as a sacred deposit to be preserved for ever. The latter of these courses, as we know, it has pleased the Divine Wisdom to follow. Under the ancient dispensation, holy men of God were guided by the Holy Spirit to commit to writing what God would have men know concerning Himself, concerning men's relations to Him, and concerning His dealings with men, whether as the objects of His favour or as under His displeasure and exposed to His wrath. So, also, under the Christian dispensation, the history and sayings of the great Author of Christianity have been committed to writing, and this has come down to us along with certain writings which, besides recording the early fortunes of the Churches He planted, contain expositions of the truths which He commissioned His servants to communicate to men, and which are presumed to be in substance identical with what was taught orally by those endowed with supernatural gifts in the early Churches. These writings, both of the ancient and new dispensations, are accepted in the Christian Church as the only written record of religious truth that possesses divine authority, and can claim to be the word of God. Now, this authority rests on the assumption that these writings have been produced so as to convey to us what God would have us believe and do. They are not mere



human records of events, nor mere human expositions of divine truth; in some sense they contain God's word, are His writing, convey to us His mind, and demand our reverence and submission as truly God's message to us. To express this we say, using an apostle's words, that they are "given by inspiration of God."

Without attempting anything like a full investigation of the subject of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures in all its bearings, I shall ask your attention to one department of it, viz. the actual phenomena exhibited by the Scriptures themselves as written compositions which bear upon the question of their authorship, and the work of the Holy Spirit in connection with that authorship.

(i.) Looking at the history of the writings, we find that, whilst they have been marvellously preserved from age to age so that no important part of them has been lost and no corruption affecting their substance has been permitted, they have been left to incur the fate of all ancient documents in being more or less corrupted by the errors of transcribers or by the additions and conjectural emendations of critics. As a consequence of this, while we assuredly possess the very books in substance as they came from the hands of their authors, we cannot be sure that the form has not more or less been affected by causes which have altered it from what it originally was. If we trace the former of these, as we are bound to do, to God's care that the truths He inspired through His servants into the sacred page should descend in uncorrupted purity to subsequent ages, we may regard the latter as indicating that He did not attach the same character of sacredness to the words in which they were embodied, or regard the preservation of these as essential to the preservation of the truth itself. This seems to favour the idea that the divinity of the Scriptures lies in the substance of their contents and not in the words in which these are expressed. It was a contrary opinion which roused so keen an opposition on the part of many learned and able men to the collection of various readings of the text of the N. T. They thought that by these the confidence of men in the divinity of Scripture would be shaken; and they were undoubtedly right in this if, as they

believed, the words of Scripture are as truly divine as the substance of it. That which is divine cannot admit of alteration. No change, whether it be an omission or an addition, or the substitution of one thing for another, can have any other effect than to detract from the original perfection of that which is divine. If, then, there is divinity in the words of Scripture, every, even the minutest, alteration of any of these words must have the effect of detracting from its divinity; and the collection of various readings, showing that thousands of such alterations have been made, among which it is not often possible to determine which is the correct reading, cannot but shake the faith of men in the divinity of the Bible. It is on this ground that the followers of Mahommed, who believe that the words of the Koran were dictated by God, will not allow the possibility of any variety in the readings of any MS. It is only on a similar assumption that the collection of various readings of the Scripture texts can be condemned; and the fact that such various readings are abundant, shows that in the case of Scripture such an assumption cannot be legitimately made.

(ii.) Looking at the books themselves, we see that the divine control exercised upon the writers was not such as to supersede, or even greatly to qualify, the peculiar mental and personal characteristics of each. We find that each has a style peculiar to himself; the language of each is of the country or class to which he belonged; the allusions in which each indulges are to things with which he himself, from position, education, or outward circumstances, was familiar; and, in short, the whole composition bears traces of free and unfettered mental action on the part of the writer. With this characteristic of the sacred writings every one is familiar, or if he is not it needs only a very cursory study of these writings to make him so. On the other hand, with all these characteristic diversities there is an undeniable unity pervading the whole collection—a unity of thought, sentiment, design, and spirit which betokens the agency of some one superintending mind in the composition. Whilst the former of these phenomena is inconsistent with the hypothesis that the contents of Scripture were dictated by the Holy Spirit to the writers, and by them put down mechanically as they

stand; the latter is irreconcilable with the hypothesis that the writers of the different books of Scripture were under no common control or guidance, and equally with the hypothesis that there is a human element intermingled with a divine element in these writings, *i.e.* that parts of them are simply human, and parts of them divine compositions. The only hypothesis that will meet the facts of the case as just stated is that all and every part of the composition is both human and divine; the agency of the Holy Spirit being so put forth as not to suppress the free agency of the writer, or to interfere with the natural operation of his faculties.

(iii.) Whatever aid the sacred writers received from the Holy Spirit, it was not such as to raise them above the prevailing popular notions on matters outside the sphere of religion, especially matters of physical science. Marvellously, indeed, have they been preserved from placing on the sacred page any of the gross and ridiculous opinions which formed part of the cosmogony and mythology of the ancients. But whilst this indicates the presence with them of a power such as did not preside over the creations of heathen genius and speculation, we see plainly that this power was not exercised in the way of conveying to them illumination on points of scientific knowledge beyond that of the age in which they lived. We find accordingly in their writings statements which no ingenuity can reconcile with what modern research has shown to be the scientific truth, *i.e.* we find in them statements which modern science proves to be erroneous. Now, I cannot believe that God would formally dictate to a man anything that is not absolutely and literally true; and when, consequently, I find in the sacred writings statements which science shows me to be erroneous, I am led to conclude that they are there because God, for wise and worthy ends, permitted the sacred writers to express themselves, when such subjects came in their way, as they and all around them were accustomed to express themselves; for which we can see one good reason at least, *viz.* that in no other way could they have been understood by the people to whom they in the first instance addressed themselves.

(iv.) The sacred writers, except when they formally announce a message from God, write very much like men

expressing what was in their own consciousness. Their standpoint is that of their own subjectivity. They do not appear as men who report or repeat something from another. They tell what they themselves think and feel and observe and know, even sometimes what they themselves want; nay, not seldom they give utterance to feelings which are wholly human, and not always such as are to be commended (as, *e.g.*, in some of the Psalms, where the language is that of angry invective and bitter vindictiveness). All this may be accounted for on the supposition that they wrote out of their own minds and hearts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to whom it seemed meet that they should thus give expression to what was in their individual consciousness; but it seems to me utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that it is God who thus speaks, and that the human writer merely records what God says.

(v.) In consequence of this predominant subjectivity of the writers their statements of doctrine are sometimes partial, though always reconcilable with each other. Even when writing doctrinally they do not always give the whole truth absolutely in its entirety and in all its bearings. Most commonly it is only a part of the truth that is presented by the writer, and very generally it is not dogmatically that the truth is presented, but in its relation to some circumstances known to the writer, or some practical end in which he or those for whom he writes are interested; so that it is only by a process of comparison and induction that we arrive at the truth in its entirety. That men writing thus should nevertheless teach essentially the same truth, so that when their different utterances are pieced together a consistent whole is obtained, is of itself evidence sufficient of their being under divine superintendence whilst they wrote; for only on this supposition can we understand how innumerable partial statements of doctrine by different persons and at different times should be resolvable into one harmonious whole, and how thoughts uttered accidentally and casually, as it were, should yet in no case be found to clash with each other, but all fall into one great scheme of doctrine. On the other hand, the manner in which doctrinal truth is announced by these writers is such as to forbid the supposition that they

were mere organs of the Spirit who dictated to them what they have written. The thoughts they express are evidently such as they had in their own minds, and which they utter after their own manner and apply as their judgment prescribes.

(vi.) In regard to matters of fact and history, we find many and often serious discrepancies of statement between the different writers, and sometimes in the writings ascribed to the same author. Some of these are to be traced to errors on the part of copyists, and are of no moment as affecting the original composition of the writings. But there are others, and these of importance, which are not to be accounted for in this way. The most solemn injunction, for instance, of the old covenant, the law of the ten commandments, and the most solemn institute of the new dispensation, the Lord's Supper, appear under different forms in different parts of the sacred writings. In some of the historical books of the O. T. we come upon statements which are almost contradicted by statements in other of these books; and in the narratives of our Lord's life as given by the four evangelists there are differences of statement which it is impossible to reconcile. Now, what are we to make of such discrepancies as relating to the composition of these writings? Obviously they cannot be reconciled with the supposition that the Holy Spirit dictated what we find written; for, as with Him there is no variableness and no possibility of mistake, what He dictates must ever be the precise truth, neither in substance nor in form susceptible of change. On the hypothesis, however, that the Holy Spirit in guiding the writers of the different books permitted them to write out of their own minds and to state things as they remembered them or had received them from others when nothing depended on the perfect accuracy of their remembrance or report, the phenomena will be accounted for, and these discrepancies will be seen to be only what might be expected to occur when different witnesses were left free to give their testimony according to what they knew and believed. The opponents of revelation have made the most of these discrepancies as against the inspiration of the sacred writers, and believers have often been sorely troubled because of them. But though they are fatal to the theory of a mechanical inspiration, they present no real difficulty in

the way of such a theory as that which I have endeavoured to expound. If God directed and guided the writers to put down in writing things as they themselves remembered and knew them, their writings are as truly *θεόπνευσται*, God-inspired, as if every word had been dictated to them by the Holy Spirit.

(vii.) The conclusion to which these considerations bring us is that the inspiration of the sacred books is the result of the acting of the Divine Spirit on the minds of the writers so as to leave them perfectly free to utter what was in their minds, whencesoever derived, whether from their own observation, or from tradition, or from human records, or from divine revelation; yet ever so as to preserve them from any statement that would be inconsistent with the great purpose for which the Bible was written, and from every reference or inference that should be either inadequate or misleading. What they put down in writing was what was in their own minds, what they thought or felt or knew in respect of the matter in hand; but it was all put down *ἐν πνεύματι*, so that the whole composition came to be exactly such as God willed it to be for the end it was designed to serve.

There was thus in the production of Scripture a union of the divine and the human, not a combination of what was purely divine with what was purely human, so that one part of Scripture should be wholly of God and another part wholly of man, but a union of the divine and the human in the composition, so that every part is both human and divine. We may find an illustration of this in other cases of the union of divine with the human. Take, for instance, the case of the union of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of man in the regeneration and sanctification of believers. The analogy between this and the union of the Divine Spirit with the human in the composition of Scripture is close, and the two are mutually illustrative. In both cases the divine influence comes of God's grace upon an individual, and certainly effects that for which it comes forth; in both cases its action is direct and immediate; and in both it is such as not to interfere with the ordinary laws and operations of the human mind that is the subject of it.

No one who believes in God as the Creator and Governor

of all things, man's mind included, will deny that God may act on the mind of an individual so as, without interfering with the laws of thought and feeling in the man, or making his influence patent or perceptible to the man's consciousness, to produce results that without such influence would not have been produced. And no one who receives the Bible and has himself experienced the salvation it announces needs to be told that in the regeneration and sanctification of men such a divine operation actually takes place. Here, then, is a case, lying within our own knowledge and experience, of the union of the divine agency with the human for the production of a certain effect. How that union is effected, or by what means God acts on man's mind so as neither to destroy his independent agency nor to suspend any of the ordinary mental operations, and so also as that the man shall have no consciousness of any influence exerted upon him, we cannot tell; but the fact that He does so act cannot be questioned or doubted. What takes places, then, in regeneration and sanctification? Not that God puts into us something foreign to us, and which comes into manifestation apart from the ordinary laws and operations of our minds, but that He so works in us to will and to do that what comes forth is our thought, our feeling, our purpose, our act, and yet at the same time a thought, feeling, purpose, and act inspired in us by God. Regeneration is thus both a divine act and a human act; it is not partly divine and partly human, one part being done by God and another part by man; it cannot be analyzed thus; it is all through both divine and human, the product of the human spirit and the Divine Spirit acting as one. It is the same with sanctification. It is God that sanctifieth; and yet it is by the exercise of his own will and the use of his own faculties that man attains to holiness. Now, exactly analogous to this is inspiration as exercised in the writing of Scripture. The Holy Spirit acted directly on the minds of the writers so as to produce a certain definite result, yet not so as to suspend the use of their own faculties or to awaken in them any consciousness of an action within them other than that of their own minds. The result was not a composition exclusively divine or exclusively human, not a composition of which one part is divine and another human,

but a composition wholly divine and wholly human, the two being so united by a supernatural power that they cannot be separated or viewed apart.

We might borrow an analogy also, illustrative of the point before us, from the union of the divine and the human in the Person of our Lord; though the analogy here is not so close as in the previous case, nor does it come so much within the sphere of our own experience. Still, we have here an instance of the divine being united with the human so closely that each resulting word and act was both human and divine. There was not in Jesus Christ a divine Person and a human Person, thinking, feeling, and acting separately; in Him there was but one person, a divine-human; He was not God *and* man: He was God-man, Θεάνθρωπος. He was the Word that was God, and became flesh and dwelt among men, the image of the invisible God. All His utterances consequently were divinely human; though expressed in the language of the people among whom He dwelt, they were truly divine words, words God-inspired. Analogous to this was the union of the Divine Spirit with the human in the composition of Scripture. As in the Person of Christ there was a union of the divine and human natures so that all that proceeded from Him was both divine and human, so also in the composition of Scripture there was a union of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of the persons employed to write the books, so that all that proceeded from their pens was at once human and divine. In this analogy there appears no fallacy or incoherence; and it may therefore be fairly stated as tending to elucidate the subject now under consideration.

We may now answer categorically the question, What is inspiration as predicated of the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments? It was not a dictating of what was written by the Divine Spirit to the men who wrote, so that the words of Scripture are simply the utterances of the Spirit conveyed mechanically to the material substance on which they are inscribed by human hands. It was not a mere superintending of the thoughts and words of the writers so as to preserve them from serious error or mistake. It was not a communicating to them of certain truths and facts which they were left to set down in writing, each after his own fashion. It was the union of the Divine Spirit with the mind and soul of the



writer, so that what he wrote was a composition divinely-human. The Bible is thus at once the word of God and the word of man, and comes to us in the very form in all its parts and in all its utterances in which God willed that it should come.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### ii. THE ORDINARY OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT.

##### (i.) *Divine Influence : Common and Special Grace.*

We now proceed to consider what has been called the abiding and ordinary work of the Spirit, in distinction from His extraordinary work, a part of which we have already considered in dealing with the subject of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Ignorant as we are of the mode of the divine operation on the mind of man, our consideration ought properly to be confined to the work of the Spirit in its manifestation in those phenomena which may be traced to His divine influence. But at the outset of our investigation we meet a question which has been started as to the extent and limitations of this influence, and to the consideration of this we must now address ourselves.

The Holy Spirit abides with and in the Church, and the ordinances which He has instituted and the protection He affords to the Church at large are common benefits of which all are free to partake. In His operations, however, His work is special, and is directed upon individuals. This is manifest at once in respect of those operations which are denominated extraordinary. The spiritual gifts bestowed on the primitive Church were bestowed on individuals selected on purpose to receive them, and specially acted on by the Spirit for this end. The same is obviously true of those who were inspired of God to commit to writing the things of God contained in the Holy Scriptures; that was an endowment bestowed on

individuals selected by God, and which was enjoyed by them alone. The raising up of men fitted to carry on the work of God in the Church, and sent forth for this end, is from the nature of the case a special work, and can be none else; and so also is every gracious interposition of the Spirit for the protection, guidance, and comfort of believers. It has been denied, however, that the work of the Spirit is special in the conversion and sanctification of men. A distinction has been taken between special and common grace; and whilst it is allowed that occasionally God may, by a special influence of His Spirit, act on men's minds for their benefit and spiritual advancement, it is maintained that ordinarily the grace of the Spirit is given to men in common to profit withal, and that it is only as each uses for himself the grace thus bestowed universally that he is benefited thereby.

1. From the way in which some who contend for the doctrine of common grace express themselves, it would appear that they regard the whole human race as endowed with the gift of the Spirit in such measure as to enable them to believe the gospel when offered to them, and so to be saved. Thus Bishop Tomline says, "God has equally enabled every man to work out his own salvation;" "God gives to every man, through the means of His grace, a power to perform the conditions of the gospel." "In consequence," says Mr. Richard Watson, "of the atonement of Christ offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all." "The virtues of the unregenerate man," he says, "are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to the world through the atonement;" "The doctrine of the impartation of grace to the unconverted, in a sufficient degree to enable them to embrace the gospel, must be admitted." But though this is an endowment universally bestowed, it is not regarded by evangelical divines as operative save in connection with the institution of Christianity, and where the gospel of Christ is made known. Some even hold that it is in and by baptism that this common grace is bestowed. This is the doctrine of the High Anglicans, derived by them from the Church of Rome. "Whatever some few persons, or some petty sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now)," says Barrow, "may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very

general consent delivered in the Catholic Church, that to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abused, ill-treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill-behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them." "It had been foretold by John the Baptist," says Tomline, "that Christ should baptize with the Holy Ghost, meaning that the baptism instituted by Christ and administered by His apostles and their successors should convey the supernatural assistance of the Spirit of God. This communication being made at baptism, at the time of admission into the gospel covenant, every Christian must possess the invaluable blessing of preventing grace, which, without extinguishing the evil propensities of our nature, inspires holy desires, suggests good counsels, and excites to just works."<sup>1</sup> "The sacraments," says Möhler, expounding the teaching of the Romish Church, "are conceived as channels (*quasi alveus*) through which the power that flows from the sufferings of Christ, the grace which the Saviour hath merited for us, is separated and conveyed to each individually, that through help of the same the health of the soul may be restored or confirmed. . . . As respects the way in which the sacrament conveys to us sanctifying grace, it is taught in the Catholic Church that it works in us in virtue of its own proper character as an institution provided by Christ for our salvation (*ex opere operato scil. a Christo, not quod operatus est Christus*), i.e. the sacraments confer a divine power merited for us by the Saviour which can be effected by no human disposition, by no mental state or effort, but is simply given by God for Christ's sake in the sacrament."<sup>2</sup> This is an expansion of what is more tersely expressed by the Council of Trent in one of their decrees: "Si quis dixerit per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta ex opere operato non conferri gratiam, sed solam fidem

<sup>1</sup> *Refutation of Calvinism*, 8th ed. p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Symbolik*, 5th ed. pp. 257-8.

divinæ promissionis ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, anathema sit."<sup>1</sup>

This doctrine of the sacraments it is no part of our business at present to examine; I have adduced it simply as connected with the opinion that under the new dispensation grace is bestowed on men in common by the Spirit of God, whereby they obtain power to believe the gospel and to follow a religious course, and as showing how, in the judgment of some, this grace is communicated. The point to be considered at present is, whether this opinion is itself well-founded; in other words, whether there is any sufficient reason for believing that a donation of the Spirit has been given to men in common, whereby they are enabled to believe in Christ and walk in the ways of God and of holiness if they will.

Now, when such a position is assumed, we are entitled to demand that it shall be supported by some distinct testimony from Scripture before we are asked to accept it. This, however, we shall search for in vain in the writings of those by whom it is advanced. General affirmations of man's inability of himself without aid from above to do the will of God, on the one hand, and declarations of God's willingness to give the aid of His Spirit to those who ask it, on the other, are plentifully supplied; but no attempt is made to show from Scripture that God actually has bestowed His Spirit on all men in the sense affirmed. Some, indeed, who catch at the words of Scripture, but do not stop to inquire into their real import, quote the words of God by the prophet Joel, "And it shall come to pass afterwards" [or, as St. Peter gives it in quoting this passage, "in the last days," *ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις*, Acts ii. 17, a meaning which Kimchi also gives, understanding it of the times of the Messiah], "that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," as authorizing their position. The more instructed of their party, however, know better than to do this; they know that the promise in this passage has reference, not to the ordinary operations of the Spirit, but to those which are extraordinary, to the endowing of men with the Spirit of prophecy, so that they should see visions and receive divine communications in ecstatic dreams; and that the phrase "all flesh" does not mean the whole human race, but persons of all nations and

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. vii. can. 8.

classes, as is evident from the subsequent distribution of this into sons and daughters, young men, servants, and handmaids, and from St. Peter's application of it on the day of Pentecost, when he asserted that the miraculous gifts then exhibited by the disciples of Christ, male and female, were a fulfilment of this ancient prediction and promise (Acts ii. 14 ff.).

In one of the passages which I have cited from Mr. Watson he apparently argues for the universality of the gift of the Spirit from the universality of the atonement made by Christ. "In consequence," he says, "of the atonement of Christ offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all." If by this he means that because the atonement of Christ is sufficient for all, the gift of the Spirit, as one of the benefits accruing for it, must be conveyed to all, he obviously assumes a position which is contradicted by fact, and which is in itself absurd, for the provision of a remedy is surely not to be confounded with the actual application of that remedy; as if one were to say, There is a medicine which is of universal efficiency for the cure of a particular disease, therefore every one afflicted with that disease will receive the medicine, and if he use it rightly will be healed. Or, perhaps, he means only that there is a parallelism between the atoning work of Christ and the gift of the Spirit—that the one has the same *extent* as the other, and that the benefits of the one are enjoyed by men under the *same conditions* as the other. Now this is true; but it leads to a conclusion the reverse of that for which Mr. Watson contends. For, as the atonement of Christ is of universal sufficiency and its benefits are free to all, yet is effectual for salvation only as it is applied; so the influence of the Spirit is of universal sufficiency, but becomes effectual only as it actually operates on any. When the parallel is thus stated, and this is the just statement of it, it becomes apparent that the infinite sufficiency of the Spirit's influence no more guarantees its universal efficiency than the boundless sufficiency of the Saviour's atonement guaranteed its universal efficiency for the salvation of men.

Bishop Tomline says, "God has equally enabled every man to work out his own salvation." By this he must mean, not that the same measure of grace is given to every man; for as men have different degrees of need, were the same

measure of grace given to all, all would not be equally enabled to work out their salvation; he must mean that all receive grace *proportionate* to their need, so as to be all alike able to work out their salvation. This raises the question, Why, then, do some obtain salvation while others do not? If an influence is exerted upon two individuals adequate to move them alike and equally, how comes it that the one is moved while the other remains fixed and obdurate? If there are two bodies to be moved, and a power sufficient to move each is applied to both, is it conceivable that the one body should be moved while the other remains at rest?

To this it may be replied, that as man is not a mere body to be moved mechanically by an outward force, but is an intelligent and free agent who is moved only as he wills to move, it is conceivable that of two men equally enabled by the Spirit to work out their salvation one may be saved while the other remains impenitent, inasmuch as the former may will to use the power which has been given him, while the other wills not to use it. This raises the question, What is the power which is supposed to be given by the Spirit to man? Is it the conferring on him of some mental faculty he has not naturally? or is it the giving to him of a disposition which inclines him to goodness, and impels him to will to be and to do what is required for salvation? The former of these no one will be found to maintain, for neither does Scripture assert nor does experience show that any new faculty has been conferred on the human race in consequence of the atonement of Christ; and, besides, were man naturally destitute of the faculty of apprehending and obeying the law of truth and goodness, he could not be righteously called to obey that law, nor be held responsible for neglect of it. Shall we then adopt the other hypothesis, and say that every man has in consequence of Christ's work received an influence by which he is disposed to choose the right way, to obey God's commands, to accept the invitations of the gospel, and so to work out his salvation? But in this case the question recurs with redoubled force, Why, then, is not every man saved? If every man has the natural ability to work out his salvation, and every man is influenced by the Spirit of God to will to do this, what can possibly hinder any man

from being saved? Surely the very acme of absurdity is reached when it is affirmed that every man both can do and wills to do something which yet the majority of men never do.

The truth is that those who use such language as that which I have quoted from Bishop Tomline, and the language is common to the Arminian school, have not been careful to determine the precise sense in which the words they use are to be taken. If, before speaking of man's being *enabled* to obey God's law, they would determine, on the one hand, what man *needs* in order to be able to do this, and, on the other hand, what the Holy Spirit *gives* whereby man is enabled to do this, they would probably see reason to avoid such phraseology. If, as they say, Adam lost when he fell *all* ability to do the will of God, he must have lost natural capacity to follow the path of rectitude as well as inclination or disposition to follow it. But if so, how can man be accountable for his conduct as under law to God? If he has no physical capacity to obey, how can he be blamed for not obeying? In this case sin is impossible, and virtue or holiness is equally impossible. Man is no more accountable for his actions than he is for his sufferings. Both are the result of influences over which he has no control. He is the mere slave of circumstances, and must resign pretensions to the dignity of a moral agent. From such a conclusion every one not a materialist must shrink. Was it, then, not physical capacity to do the will of God, but moral disposition or inclination to do it, that man lost by the fall? If so, what he needs is the restoration to him of this disposition or inclination. But will any say that this is given to every man? Will any affirm that every man that is born into the world is gifted with a disposition to love God and obey His law and seek His favour? Will any affirm that every child who is baptized is endowed with this disposition? No one surely will venture on such an affirmation. But if neither physical ability nor a disposition to goodness is given to man universally by the Spirit, *nothing* is given whereby man is enabled to work out his salvation; if he is to be saved at all, it must be either by an exercise of his own natural powers or by a special communication of grace to each individual who is saved.

The dictum of the Arminians regarding common grace is thus seen to be a mere form of words without any real meaning. They have been led to it by a desire to preserve to divine grace the praise of man's salvation without admitting either of the alternatives above noted. But in this they have utterly failed. In shunning the Scylla of Calvinism they have fallen into the Charybdis of Pelagianism. In refusing to admit the speciality of divine grace in human salvation, they are driven upon a course which leads logically to the denial of any grace in man's salvation at all. For, as Dr. Payne reasons, "If they maintain that an equal measure of the Spirit is given to all, or, in other words, deny that any special influence of the Holy Spirit is put forth in the conversion of men, then it follows that the faith of none is to be ascribed, simply and exclusively at least, to the influence of the Spirit,—or why does it not produce it in all?—but partly, at any rate, to the better moral state in which this primary gift of the Spirit found them, or to their better improvement of a donation and privilege common to all,—an improvement in which they have no additional assistance from the Spirit of God, for that would involve in it a special operation and a special purpose, or, in other words, the doctrine of eternal and personal election. But to affirm that the salvation of the saved is to be ascribed to their own unassisted and better improvement of the means of salvation, is, in effect, to ascribe the salvation of man to himself."<sup>1</sup> Or we may put the argument thus: Here are two men who have received an equal measure of the Spirit in order to salvation, the one of whom is converted and saved, while the other remains impenitent and unsaved. Now, who made these two men thus to differ? themselves or God? If themselves, then is salvation not of grace but of works, inasmuch as it is the man's own acting alone which has made him who is saved to differ from him that is lost. If God, then a special influence must have been exerted on the one man which was not exerted on the other, for only thus could the salvation of the one be effected by God. Between these alternatives, then, the Arminian must make his choice. If he take the former, he will not easily preserve

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on *Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 66, 2nd ed.



himself from sinking into Pelagianism; if he take the latter, he cannot escape Calvinism, for the admission of a special divine influence in the conversion of a sinner draws after it the admission of an elective purpose and predestination on the part of God in reference to the individual so influenced.

2. The doctrine of common grace we have been considering is peculiar to the Arminian school. There is another doctrine which sometimes bears the same designation which is held by many Calvinists as well as by Arminians; indeed it may almost be regarded as the commonly received doctrine of the Evangelical Churches. Thus in the Assembly's Larger Catechism, in answer to the question, "Are the elect effectually called?" it is replied, "All the elect and they only are effectually called, although others may be and often are outwardly called by the ministry of the word, and *have some common operations of the Spirit*; who, for their wilful neglect and contempt of the grace offered to them, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ." So also Owen says: "In reference to the work of regeneration itself *positively* considered, we may observe that there are certain *previous* and preparatory works or workings in and upon the souls of men that are antecedent and *dispositive* unto it. But yet regeneration doth not consist in them, nor can it be educed out of them." And after instancing illumination, conviction of sin, and a reformation of life as things which "may be wrought in the minds of men by the dispensation of the word, and yet the work of regeneration be never perfected in them," he adds, "All the things mentioned as wrought instrumentally by the word are *effects* of the power of the Spirit of God. The word itself under a bare proposal to the minds of men will not so affect them;" and farther on he says, "What He [the Holy Spirit] worketh in any of these effectually and infallibly accomplisheth the *end* aimed at, which is no more but that men be enlightened, convinced, humbled, and reformed, wherein He faileth not."<sup>1</sup>

(1.) For the more precise apprehension of this doctrine of common grace, it may be observed that the operation of the Spirit on the minds of men is assumed to be special, *i.e.* it is not an influence diffused over men universally, but one which

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. iii. pp. 229, 234, 235, 237.

acts specially on each individual affected by it. The grace thus bestowed is common, not in the sense of being given to all men in common, but in the sense of producing effects which are ordinary, and may fall short of a real saving efficacy.

(2.) This operation of the Spirit on the mind is immediate and direct. It may be and usually is in connection with the word; but the effect is that "of the power of the Spirit of God."

(3.) This operation is always efficacious for the end at which it aims. The power of the Spirit may be limited in its aim, but whatever it aims at it infallibly accomplishes.

(4.) The things aimed at by the Spirit in these common operations are illumination of the mind, conviction of sin, and amendment of life and such like, all of which may be produced and yet the individual who is the subject of them may come short of salvation.

(5.) These effects, however, are in themselves *dispositive* to salvation, have a *tendency* to lead on to regeneration and the higher life, and are rendered fruitless in this respect by wilful neglect and contempt of the grace of which they are the objects.

It will be at once apparent that *this* doctrine of common grace is in no wise opposed to the doctrine of special grace in the conversion and sanctification of the saved, and may be held with perfect consistency by those who hold that only the elect are effectually called. For the grace bestowed is in both cases supposed to be special; the only difference being that in the one case the effect produced comes short of actual salvation, whilst in the other that result is secured.

Now, that God may be pleased in particular instances to operate on the minds of individuals so as to produce effects which are only transient and do not terminate in their actual renewal and ultimate salvation, it would be rash to deny. At the same time it must strike every one as somewhat *improbable* that such an expenditure, if we may so speak, of the divine grace should take place; improbable that He who does nothing in vain should operate on men's minds to produce effects which confessedly lead to nothing, which though, as Owen expresses it, "dispositive" to salvation, yet are not so

continued as to end in salvation. Does not this seem as if God might begin a good work in man, and yet fail to complete it either through forgetfulness or some change of mind ?

What is thus in itself improbable is shown to be altogether untenable when it is considered that it is without any support from Scripture, and that the facts which it is supposed to be necessary to account for may be accounted for without it.

The effects supposed to be produced are, as enumerated by Owen : (1) Illumination, (2) Conviction, and (3) Reformation ; the first respecting the mind only ; the second, the mind, conscience, and affections ; and the third, the life and conversation ; all of which, he says, may be produced in men who yet remain impenitent and die in sin. Now, it is remarkable that though Scripture records instances in which all these effects were produced in men who yet remained impenitent, it nowhere ascribes these to the operation of the Spirit of God on these men. Ahab humbled himself before God ; but it was because he heard the words of Elijah denouncing his sin, and threatening him with terrible retribution, that this effect was produced. The men of Nineveh repented and amended their ways ; but it was at the preaching of Jonah that they did this. Herod did many things, and heard John the Baptist gladly ; but it is expressly said that it was because he observed him and heard him that this effect was produced. Felix trembled, and seemed disposed to do justly by the apostle ; but it was because Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" that the Roman procurator was thus moved. The heathen, the apostle says, do the things contained in the law, though they are without the law ; but he expressly says, they do this "by nature." The seed which fell on stony ground, in our Lord's parable, represents those who endure but for a while in a good course ; but their entering that course at all is ascribed exclusively to their hearing the word and with joy receiving it. These are all the instances I find adduced by those who advocate this doctrine ; and in all of them there is not only no allusion to a divine influence as having operated the results described, but in nearly all of them this is expressly attributed to a mere natural or external cause.

Some of the writers who advocate this doctrine refer in

support of it to certain passages of Scripture in which God is represented as by His Spirit striving with men without effect; but, even allowing that the reference in such cases is to an operation by the Spirit directly on the minds of men, these instances only prove that God may in special cases, such as that of the men before the flood, strive and labour to subdue men's obduracy without effect; they can never be held to prove that this is God's ordinary procedure with men, or that such effects as we see sometimes in unregenerate persons of a good character, are produced in them by the direct action of the Spirit of God. But *are* such passages to be taken in this way? When God says, for instance, in reference to the antediluvians, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for he is flesh" (Gen. vi. 3), is the meaning that God would no longer operate directly on the minds of men as He had been operating hitherto? I do not stop to inquire if this be the correct rendering of the passage; I believe it is not; but, be this as it may, the question I would urge is, Does the passage as it stands in the A. V. authorize the conclusion that it was by directly operating on their minds that God strove with the antediluvians? If this be assumed, we must suppose that it is possible for a creature not only to enter into a personal struggle with the Divine Spirit, but to pursue that so successfully as to weary out the Almighty, and constrain Him to give up the contest in disgust. This is too absurd to be accepted. What, then, are we to understand by the Spirit of God striving with men? An answer to this may be obtained if we look at such a passage as Deut. xxxiii. 8: "And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah." Here there is no question as to the translation. The verb used is *נָאָרַץ*, the proper meaning of which is to contend, to strive, and which is used both of a contending with blows and of a contending with words. Here, then, is an undoubted case of a striving of God with men: the question is, How was this done? The history supplies the answer. The place was called Meribah, "strife," "quarrel," because there the Israelites "chode with Moses their leader, saying, Give us water that we may drink" (Ex. xvii. 2, 7). Moses was the

servant of God, the bearer of God's commands to the people, and the instrument of God's working among them or in regard to them. In chiding with him, in reproaching him, and complaining of the condition into which they had been brought under his leading, they virtually spoke against God, and contended with Him. Here, then, to strive with God means to be rebellious against His ordinances, to struggle against His arrangement, to complain of His appointment, and to murmur against one employed to convey His will to men and carry out what He has designed. Take, again, Isa. xlv. 9: "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?" Here striving with God is plainly identified with complaining of His arrangement, challenging His right to do to and with His creatures as He sees meet, and throwing the blame of man's misconduct or want on God, who has made man as he is, and places him where he is. Once more, take Isa. lvii. 16: "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." Here the same verb, *נִלְחַם*, is used, and the reference undoubtedly is to the sending of judgments upon His people, whereby they were chastised and subdued; God had done this, but He says here He will no longer do so to them, lest they should be utterly destroyed. Let these instances suffice. They sufficiently show that when God is said to strive with men, or, what is the same thing, when men are said to strive with God, the meaning is that God sends His commands on men which they refuse to obey, makes arrangements for men to which they will not submit, or sends judgments on them by which they are chastised and corrected. By these usages, then, is the passage in Genesis to be explained. God's Spirit strove with the antediluvians by sending them messages of instruction and warning, surrounding them with circumstances fitted to lead them to repentance, and it may be enforcing His admonitions and warnings by varied dealings of a corrective character and tendency. Noah, we know, was to the men of his day a preacher of righteousness; he appeared as God's messenger to his contemporaries; and whilst he

admonished and warned them, and called them to repentance, "the long-suffering of God," St. Peter says, "waited," if haply they would listen to the message, and so avert the judgment that was impending (1 Pet. iii. 20). But they remained "disobedient," and so there was strife between them and God. So also it was with the people of Israel. So long as they were obedient to God's word He was at peace with them, and delighted to do them good; but when they refused to hearken, and made their hearts as hard as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent in His Spirit by the prophets, there came wrath from the Lord of hosts (Zech. vii. 12). God strove with them by His word which He sent by the prophets. When they obstinately refused to obey that, He sent on them His punitive judgment, and scattered them. It is the same still. The word of God is emphatically "the sword of the Spirit," that by which He aims to subdue the impenitency and overcome the rebelliousness of men; and only by this, or by His castigatory dealings with them in connection with this, does He strive with men. When men refuse to receive and obey His word, when they set at nought His counsel, and will have none of His reproof, when, unmoved by His judgments and threatenings they persist in their obduracy, the result can only be that they perish in their iniquity. God seeks to do men good; but when, like Israel of old, men rebel and vex His Holy Spirit, He is turned to be their enemy, and fights against them for their destruction.

3. There are who think that man is not able to obey God's word without the aid of the Spirit; and it has been maintained that all the things which apparently are effected in unregenerate men by the word are really the effects of the Spirit's power on their minds, the word itself being held to be impotent so to affect them. But if man has not power to do what God commands him to do, how can he be held guilty or be justly punished for not obeying? and how can the righteousness of God be vindicated if He exacts from His creature what he has no ability to render? Where ability ends, obligation ceases; impotency is exempt from law, and to demand of a subject what he is physically unable to render is the part of a tyrant and not of a righteous Lord. It is

simply impossible, then, that God, who is perfectly righteous, can lay on man any command which man is not able to obey if he will. *Morally* unable he may be, because of his aversion from God and his dislike to what God requires; but his *natural* ability to do what God enjoins cannot be denied without imputing unrighteousness to God in laying on him such an injunction.

As to the word of God being impotent to effect any spiritual result in those to whom it is sent, and as needing, consequently, some accession of power to render it effectual, which accession the Holy Spirit is supposed to give, not only in conversion and regeneration, but in what are regarded as the common operations of the Spirit, it is to be observed,—

(1.) That the word of God cannot be regarded as impotent to effect that for which it is sent forth without casting discredit on the word itself, and impeaching the wisdom of Him by whom it is issued. The word of God embodied in a message to men is a means to an end. But if it be not adequate to effect that end, of what real worth is it? and as wisdom is seen in the adaptation of means to ends, how shall we vindicate wisdom to God if it is seen that the means He has instituted are in this case impotent to effect the end for which they were designed? Now, the word of God is that by which men are to be instructed in divine knowledge, by which they are to be enlightened, guided, and purified, by which they are to be convicted of sin and brought to repentance, by which, in short, they are to be made wise unto salvation. But if it is in itself incompetent to this, if it cannot enlighten and sanctify unless some power be added to it from without, who does not see that the means provided by God for this special end are insufficient, and that consequently there is here a failure and a mistake on the part of God? "The gospel," as has been well said, "is the spiritual medicine of the soul;" it is the specific which God has provided for the cure of man's spiritual malady. But if it is declared to be insufficient for this, if when applied it is found to be impotent to heal the disease, then surely it is pronounced to be an imposture, and its Author is charged with ignorance or folly in sending it forth.

(2.) Scripture distinctly asserts that the word of God is

in itself powerful and altogether sufficient to accomplish the end for which it is designed. "The word of God," we are told, "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12; see also Jer. xxiii. 29; Ps. xix. 7, cxix. 130; Rom. i. 16). Clearly, therefore, the word of God asserts for itself power to accomplish the results for which it is sent forth. To maintain that it has not this power unless some additional power be somehow added to it, is plainly to contradict the testimony of that word concerning itself.

(3.) As no means can effectuate the intended result unless they be applied, the word of God may be rendered ineffectual through man's refusing to receive it, or through his resisting it when it has begun to operate upon him. A medicine may be specially fitted to cure a disease, but it will not effect that result unless it be applied, and be allowed to operate without the counteractive influence of some antagonist influence; and in like manner the word of God, though in itself perfectly adequate to the cure of man's moral maladies, may be rendered fruitless through man's own negligence, and the counteractive influence of his hostility to it. Accordingly, when the apostle says that the law was impotent to condemn sin in the flesh, he is careful to assert that it was through the flesh that it was thus weak (Rom. viii. 3); it was weak, not in itself, for the law is holy, just, and good, but through man's carnality and unwillingness to submit to it. So also, when he speaks of the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, he conditions this by its being believed. If the gospel fails, then, in making man wise to salvation, the fault is not with it, but with the men themselves. They will not receive it or obey it. The faculty of faith is not wanting, the credibility of the gospel message is not wanting, the power of the gospel to save is not wanting; what is wanting is "the obedience of faith," the willingness on the part of man to accept the divine message, and to be saved in the way God has provided and in that message announces. As our Lord complained of the men of His day that they *would* not come unto Him that they might have life, so it is still simply



because men refuse to hearken, or because when they have received the word "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mark iv. 19). In some cases the word produces no effect at all, because the heart is obstinately closed against it; in others it produces conviction, penitence, and resolution to amend; but the soil of the heart still remaining unchanged, these fruits endure but for a while, and ere long go up as dust, or vanish as the morning cloud or the early dew. They become permanent, and the fruit is unto eternal life, only where the Spirit has previously made the soil good; then the good seed falling upon it is received, and fruit is brought forth to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

(4.) It may be at once seen from this what it is that the Holy Spirit does for the salvation of men to whom the gospel is brought. That divine Agent does not give any added power or force to the word, any more than He gives additional faculty to man to receive it; He simply removes that which hinders the word from being received, or obstructs its operation when received. As in the case of Lydia, God "opened her heart" so that she attended to the things spoken to her by the servants of Christ (Acts xvi. 14); so in every case where the truth is received in the love of it and unto salvation, it is because the Spirit has prepared the heart to receive it. The Spirit acts immediately and directly on the inner nature of man, so as to prepare for the entrance of the truth. God says of Israel, "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord" (Jer. xxiv. 7). "God," says the apostle, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (2 Cor. iv. 6). As "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14); the Spirit must needs give to man a renewal in the spirit of his mind before he will receive the truth by which he is to be saved. When this is effected, the man's heart is opened and the truth enters in, and dwells in him to the salvation of his soul.

(5.) When people speak of additional power being imparted to the word for the effecting of man's salvation, they use

language which is utterly devoid of meaning. They confound moral causes with physical, and because the force of a physical cause may be increased, they conclude that the force of a moral agency may also be increased. But this is impossible. The two cases are not analogous. The effect of a physical energy depends very much on the force with which it is applied; the effect of a moral energy depends solely on the intrinsic weight of the energy itself. If an addition could be made to that, there would be more power given to it to move. But this is impossible. The motive power of any truth lies in the truth itself, and as truth cannot be made more true, its motive power can receive no addition. Motives may be multiplied, but this means not that the power of any motive is increased, but only that additional motives are added. One form of expressing truth may be better than another, and so may act more powerfully on the mind than the other; but that is not because an additional power has been given to the truth, but because the truth has been more fully or more exactly brought before the mind. It is the truth expressed, and not the mere expression of it, that moves; and when the expression of any truth is just and accurate, it has only to be fairly apprehended by the mind in order to produce its proper effect. As, then, in the word of God truth is expressed most perfectly, all that is needed in order to a man's being rightly affected by it is that it shall be brought into full, immediate, and constant contact with his mind. In the degree in which the man really apprehends the truth he is affected by it. But as he may take it in only partially, or may retain it only for a season, or may resist it and treat it as if it were not truth but falsehood, the work of the Spirit on the heart is needed, that the truth may enter into the man's mind and abide there in all its fulness and in all its power.

And here I may take the opportunity of cautioning you against the use of an expression which one sometimes finds used, both from the pulpit and in books. In asserting the necessity for a divine influence to the conversion of men it is not unusual to find this connected with a declaration that the "bare word" or the "dead letter" of Scripture is not sufficient for this. Now, such phraseology is surely objectionable. That which comes to us fraught with divine truth, that which has

in it the very mind of the Spirit of God, is not, and never should be said to be "bare." And as for its being "dead," those who apply to it such an epithet surely forget that God Himself has declared it to be "quick"—that is, "living," ζῶν—"and powerful;" has declared it to be "the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." Let such phraseology, then, be avoided. It may lead to the belief that the provision which God has sent for the healing and health of the soul is essentially inoperative; and when "this idea is conveyed to the mind of a sinner it will (as Dr. Payne has justly observed) veil the full extent of his guilt by failing to fix his attention upon his own obstinate rejection of the medicine as the direct and indeed exclusive cause of his remaining under the full power of spiritual disease."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### (ii.) *The Design of the Spirit's Work.*

In the writings of the older divines we find considerable stress laid on what they call *the order of salvation* (*ordo salutis*). In this order some indicate not fewer than ten steps, while others content themselves with a smaller number. Calov and Hollaz enumerate them thus: Vocation, Illumination, Conversion, Regeneration, Justification, Mystical Union with God, Renovation, Sanctification, Conservation, and Glorification. Quenstedt follows the same enumeration, omitting the last two. Carpzov, by whom the phrase "*ordo salutis*" was introduced, gives the same number as Hollaz, but in a somewhat different order, and with some difference in the particulars: his arrangement is, Vocation, Illumination, Regeneration, Conversion, Justification, Contrition, Faith, Mystical Union, and Sanctification. Some, again, resolve the whole into four, viz. Faith, Regeneration, Justification, and Sanctification. The arrangement most generally adopted

is—1. Vocation; 2. Illumination; 3. Justification; 4. Regeneration; 5. Mystical Union; and 6. Renewal, meaning by the last the conformation of the whole man to the image of God. These are all elassed under the general head of *Gratia Spiritus Sancti applicatrice*, the appliant grace of the Holy Spirit, and they are referred to different offices which the Holy Spirit is represented as discharging, viz.—1. His *officium clenchticum* (according to John xvi. 8) or *epanorthoticum* (according to 2 Tim. iii. 16, where the Scriptures are said to be profitable *πρὸ ἐπανόρθωσιν*); 2. His *officium didascalium* (John xvi. 13--15); 3. His *officium pædæuticum* (2 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. viii. 14); and 4. His *officium paracleticum* (Rom. viii. 16, 26).

To this method of arrangement I am not disposed to pay much regard. It seems to me unnecessarily minute and formal, and though it may be possible to enunciate a distinction between the different particulars of which it consists, in reality and substantially the greater part of them are only different stages or degrees of the same act or state. To me it appears that a careful analysis will resolve them all into Vocation or Calling; Regeneration, or the implantation of a new principle of spiritual life; Justification, or the removal of all penal disabilities, and the placing of the individual in a right state in relation to the law and government of God; and Sanctification, or the removal of all moral and spiritual defilement from the individual, so that he becomes holy as God is holy, and so fit to dwell in His presence for ever.

These are the topics to which I have now to direct your attention. I shall not, however, discuss these topics as separate and collateral theses. I prefer regarding them all in their subordination to the grand result of the Spirit's working, viz. the bringing of men into the condition and to the privileges of Divine Sonship. To accomplish this is the grand design of the scheme and work of redemption. It is to this that God predestinates men: "Blessed," says the apostle, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ . . . having predestinated us to *υιοθεσίαν* [a receiving into Sonship] through Jesus Christ to Him-

self" (Eph. i. 3-5). It was for this that God sent His Son in human nature into the world (Gal. iv. 5), and it was with a view to this that the sufferings of Christ were endured (Heb. ii. 10). It is for the securing of this that the Holy Spirit has come forth from the Father, and operates in the hearts of men (Rom. viii. 14-16; Gal. iv. 6).

To bring men to the enjoyment of the Divine Sonship, then, is the great design of the entire scheme of redemption, and to this privileged state all are actually brought who receive Christ, and are accepted in Him (John i. 12; 1 John iii. 2). Thus received, God dealeth with them as with sons; and of them it is expected that they should live and act as sons of God, being without rebuke, being imitators of God, and seeking to glorify Him in their bodies and spirits which are His.

(iii.) *The Work of the Spirit in bringing men into Divine Sonship.*

We may therefore start with advantage from this point; and assuming that to bring men into the condition and to the privileges of the sons of God is the great design of Christianity, we may proceed to inquire what it is that the Holy Spirit does to individuals so as to bring them into this state, and what are the blessings which through the Spirit's working are actually secured to them. We shall thus be led to consider—1. Their Vocation or Calling; 2. their Regeneration; 3. their Justification; 4. their Sanctification; 5. the securing to them of all needful guidance, sustenance, and blessing through life; 6. the Resurrection of the body as the crown and consummation of the sonship; and 7. The grand result of the whole in their reception into heaven, in their being brought to the glory of their Father's house, and in their being made perfectly like Him, when they shall see Him as He is.

1. *Vocation or Calling.*

(1.) The effectual calling of men by God brings those who are the objects of it into the condition of sons of God. As man

was made at first to be a son of God (Luke iii. 38), so it is to this high privilege that he is restored through that redemption which is in Christ Jesus. God calls those whom He hath chosen to eternal life to be sons, sons of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the sonship (*υιοθεσίαν*) (Gal. iv. 5). And all who are so redeemed may adopt the joyful utterance of the apostle, "Now are we the sons of God" (1 John iii. 2).

(2.) This divine sonship includes three states of privilege. First, it implies that those who enjoy it are the objects of God's special love. "Behold," says the apostle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1). Hence God speaketh unto them as children, and deals with them as those whom He loveth (Heb. xii. 5, 6). In accordance with this, such phrases as τέκνα ἀγαπητά are applied to them; they are spoken of as λαὸς περιούσιος (Tit. ii. 14), a phrase corresponding to the Hebrew עַם קָדְשׁ, which God applies to Israel as His special people, the people of His treasure (Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6, etc.), and of them God speaks as His property or treasure, which in the great day of the Lord He will recognize as specially His (Mal. iii. 17). The Hebrew word בְּנֵי, and the Greek περιούσιος, by which the LXX. render it, and which the N. T. writers have adopted, denote not merely a possession or something possessed; they convey the idea of something which the owner sets much store by, which he embraces and holds fast (comp. the verb קָנָה), and therefore are properly regarded as involving the idea of treasure, *peculium*, or special property. Secondly, this sonship implies the believer's resemblance to God. As the son resembles the father, so believers are to be imitators of God (*μιμηταὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ*), as dear children; they are to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect, and holy as He who hath called them is holy; they are to walk worthy of God, who hath called them to His kingdom and glory; and they are to be blameless and harmless, sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation (Eph. v. 1; Matt. v. 48; 1 Pet. i. 15; 1 Thess. ii. 12; Phil. ii. 15). They are

thus exhorted because they have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10). Made sons of God, they have been created anew in His image; and though in the present state this never appears as perfectly developed within them, yet is it there in its great lineaments, and they are subject to a grand transforming process, by which, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord; and are taught to rest in the assurance that when this process is completed, "as they have borne the image of the earthly, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 49). Thirdly, this divine sonship implies that those who are the possessors of it are the objects of God's special care, protection, and blessing. As it belongs to a parent to watch over, guide, and protect his child, seek the advantage and welfare of his child, and at the same time train and discipline him; so God our heavenly Father gives practical expression, so to speak, to His fatherhood, by caring for the welfare, watching over the interests, guiding and directing the steps, and protecting from evil those whom He has received as His sons and His daughters. God puts upon them His new name; He sends into their hearts the spirit of sonship, whereby they cry, *Abba, Father*; He gives them free access into His presence, so that they can approach Him with the confidence of children; He makes all things work together for their good; He supplies all their need according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus; He subjects them to needful chastisement, not for His pleasure, but for their profit, that they may be partakers of His holiness; and He so encompasses, guides, and sustains them, that they may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Having predestinated them to the sonship, He blesses them "with all blessing in heavenly places in Christ" (Rev. ii. 17, iii. 12; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6; Eph. iii. 12; Rom. viii. 28; Phil. iv. 19; Heb. xii. 6, xiii. 6; Eph. i. 3). Fourthly, they who partake of this divine sonship have also secured to them a divine heirship. The apostle represents the latter as involved in the former. "If

children," he argues, "then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17); and again, in writing to the Galatians, he says, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. iv. 7). Their sonship therefore secures to them an inheritance of God; and what that inheritance is St. Peter tells us (1 Pet. i. 3-5). Thus the believer, though formerly an enemy and an outcast, becomes in virtue of his sonship a partaker of the promise of eternal inheritance, and has all the rights of an heir in his Father's house.

The privileges and blessings thus included in the divine sonship of believers all hang closely together. It is the love of God which is the source of all spiritual excellence and blessing to the believer, which produces moral resemblance in his soul to God, which draws forth his affections to God and to goodness, which secures to him the guidance, protection, help, and comfort he needs here, and conveys to him the assurance of the heavenly inheritance, as well as makes him meet to be a partaker of it hereafter. In proportion also as the believer realizes these privileges of the divine sonship, in that proportion does his sense of filial relationship to God become deeper and more distinct; the *ἐχθρα* and *φόβος* of his natural state disappear, and the *φιλία* and *ἀγάπη* of a true child predominate within him, and influence his whole conduct and deportment.

(3.) Now the question arises, On what does this divine sonship of the believer rest? In other words, How and by what means does he who was not a child of God become such?

To this it is not unusual to answer, He becomes a child of God by adoption; and theologians have set forth adoption as one of the parts or stages, so to speak, in the order of salvation. Thus Turretine, who considers it as a part of justification, defines adoption to be "the judicial act of God by which, out of His mere compassion, He adopts into His family those whom He hath chosen to salvation through faith in Christ, and extends to them the name and right of sons as to inheritance."<sup>1</sup> By others adoption is regarded as distinct from justification, but they equally regard it as that by which

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xvi. Qn. 6, § 2.



men become sons of God. Thus the Confession of Faith of the Westminster divines teaches that "all those who are justified, God vouchsafeth in and for His only Son Jesus Christ to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God." And in the Shorter Catechism the same doctrine is still more tersely and distinctly taught. "Adoption," it is there said, "is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God." We may, indeed, regard it as a common doctrine of theologians of the Calvinistic school, that it is by adoption that we are made sons of God.

Now I cannot help thinking that this doctrine has been pressed out of very slender materials, and has but little, if anything, to support it in Scripture. It rests almost entirely on the use of the word *υιοθεσία* to describe the state into which believers are brought as the children of God. Now, it is true that in the later classics this word is used to designate the act of adoption, that act by which a man took the child of another man and legally placed him in the position, so far as civil rights were concerned, of a child of his own. It may be admitted also that to a certain extent the changed relation of the believer to God may be represented figuratively by this. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the figure of adoption very inadequately represents the relation of the believer to God as his Father, and the condition into which, as a child of God, he is brought; and it cannot escape notice that in order to make anything of their doctrine, theologians have had to put into it a great deal which the figure of adoption would not of itself have conveyed. An adopted child may bear the name, enjoy the favour, dwell in the house, and inherit the property of him by whom he has been adopted. But mere adoption can never produce in the person adopted resemblance to the person adopting, such as a son bears to his father; and yet this is the feature of the divine sonship in believers on which Scripture lays most stress. Besides, though *υιοθεσία*, when used of the relation of one human being to another, can mean only adoption, seeing men have no other way of placing those who are not their sons by birth in

the place of sons, it does not follow that it must mean the same when used of a state into which a man is placed by God. But what seems to me fatal to this doctrine of adoption is that Scripture so distinctly states that men become sons of God by a new creation, by being begotten of Him, by being born again, by being born of God. Surely one who is a son by begetting and by birth cannot become a son by adoption. To set about adopting a lawful child would not only be superfluous, but would be legally incompetent. When God therefore tells us we are His children by the new birth, it seems preposterous to maintain that we become His children by a process of adoption.

I am aware that those divines who hold by the doctrine of adoption do not set aside, but rather strenuously maintain that of regeneration, and satisfy themselves that they can consistently accept both. Thus Dr. Crawford,<sup>1</sup> who admits that "there is an apparent incongruity in using the two words *Regeneration* and *Adoption* with reference to believers if we insist on giving to each its strict and literal meaning. For the circumstance," he adds, "of believers being spiritually '*born of God*' would seem to preclude the sonship by *adoption*," proposes to avoid this incongruity and apparent preclusion by taking the words in a looser sense, and regarding the language as that of mere approximation. But this can hardly be accepted as satisfactory; for though it would be unwise to demand that all the words in which divine ideas or facts are made known to us should be taken in their strict literal meaning, it surely does not follow that we are at liberty to use words which, under any meaning we can fairly attach to them, mutually preclude each other, as he admits Regeneration and Adoption to do. Dr. Crawford has not told precisely under what modifications of meaning he would use each of these words, and I would not presume to say he has none to propose. But judging from what he has actually said, I venture to think he would be somewhat puzzled to put down in precise form such a definition of these two terms in relation to believers as would give to each a distinct and separate meaning, and yet not confound either of them with something else. Thus, when he contends that "adoption is not merely remedial and restora-

<sup>1</sup> *Fatherhood of God*.

tive," but that in effecting it there are "high and potent agencies employed with which we can scarcely suppose humanity to be brought into contact without having all its original elements and characteristics not only restored, but gloriously elevated and transfigured, insomuch that far more than was lost in Adam shall be gained in Christ," he seems to me to use language which appropriately describes that great change effected by the Spirit of God on man which Scripture represents as a new birth, a new creation, a passing from death unto life, and which we are accustomed to designate by the term regeneration. And when, farther on in his book, he speaks of adoption as "significant of a forensic, or, at all events, of a *federal* transaction," and describes it as "practically resulting in God's giving to His people the plighted assurances of His word, confirmed by the inward testimony of His Holy Spirit," he seems to me to identify adoption with justification, by which God entitles the believer in Christ to receive all the privileges and immunities of the kingdom of God. From this I infer that this able divine had not clearly settled in his own mind in what sense regeneration and adoption are to be taken, so as to make each significative of a proper and special state of blessing enjoyed by the child of God.

The conclusion at which I have arrived is that *υιοθεσία* as used in the N. T. is to be understood as meaning simply a state of sonship, without predicating anything as to the way in which that sonship is conferred; that there is no ground in Scripture for the doctrine of *adoption* as taught by theologians; and that the only way in which men become sons of God is by regeneration.

This truth is asserted in Scripture by various forms of expression (see John i. 12, 13, iii. 3; Rom. viii. 14, etc.).

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## CHAPTER XII.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

2. *Regeneration.*

Regeneration may be taken in a wider and in a strieter or more limited acception. In the former it includes all that is done in order to constitute one who is fallen and guilty a child of God,—the change in his legal state before God as well as the change in his heart and affections towards God; in the latter it is limited to the moral and spiritual change which takes place when a man is delivered from the dominant power of sin, and is inclined towards that which is good and holy and godly. By modern theologians, espeially in this country, it is only in this latter acception that the term is used. This is not in exact acceordance with Scripture, where that change by which men become sons of God is represented as including a change both of state and of eharacter. This is distinetly recognized in some of the Lutheran Confessions and by some of the Lutheran divines. Thus in the *Formula Concordia*, adopted by the Lutheran Church in 1577, the following statement is made: "The word regeneration is sometimes taken in such sense that it includes both the remission of sins and the subsequent renovation which the Holy Spirit operates in those who are justified by faith, sometimes also it signifies remission of sins alone and adoption to be sons of God. . . . Moreover, the word vivification is sometimes so taken as to denote the remission of sins. For, when a man is justified by faith, that by itself is a regeneration, because, from being a ehild of wrath he becomes a ehild of God, and thus is transferred from death to life." Quenstedt, a Lutheran divine, says: "Widely taken, it [regeneration] denotes restitution of spiritual life in general . . . and thus taken it comprehends under it also justification following renovation. Strictly taken, it is used for the remission of sins or justification (Gal. iii. 11), or for renovation." Hollaz, another Lutheran divine, says: "Regeneration is an act of

grace by which the Holy Spirit endows a man with saving faith, so that his sins being remitted he is made a son of God and heir of eternal life." And, not to multiply quotations, an eminent German theologian, the late Carl Immanuel Nitzsch, says: "The regeneration of man, or the divine transformation of the spiritual individual life in its original elements, is the unity of the justification and the conversion of the sinner." And in a note he adds, "Regeneration relates to the totality and unity of the self-consciousness. This, under one aspect, is more a perceptive, under another, more an active energy—representation and will. Through justification the representative self-consciousness is renewed, the way of viewing God and the relation to God in individual feeling is changed. By conversion the will is changed."<sup>1</sup> Into the accuracy of these distinctions I do not stop to inquire; I cite the passage merely to show how by a recent writer of great eminence regeneration is regarded as including both justification and conversion, or moral renovation.

I proceed now to consider regeneration under the aspect to which it is commonly restricted by theologians.

(1.) The word regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) occurs only once in the N. T., in Tit. iii. 5. The word was in use among the Greeks, but with them it had no such sense as that in which it is used by the apostle. "*Παλιγγενεσία*," says Archbishop Trench, "is one of the many words which the gospel found, and, so to speak, glorified; enlarged the borders of its meaning; lifted it up into a higher sphere; made it the expression of far deeper thoughts, of far mightier truths, than any of which it had been the vehicle before. It was, indeed, already in use; but as the Christian new birth was not till after Christ's birth, as men were not new-born till Christ was born (John i. 12), as their regeneration did not go before but only followed His generation; so the word could not be used in this its highest, most mysterious sense, till that great mystery of the birth of the Son of God into our world had actually found place."<sup>2</sup> The idea, however, which that word is used to convey appears abundantly under other forms in the N. T. We have it in such expressions as "the new

<sup>1</sup> See also Martensen's *Dogmatik*, § 232.

<sup>2</sup> *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 59, ed. 1865.

creature or creation" (*καὶνὴ κτίσις*, Gal. vi. 15), "God's workmanship" (*ποίημα Θεοῦ*, Eph. ii. 9), "created in Christ" (*κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ*, ver. 10), or "according to God" (*κατὰ Θεόν*, iv. 24), as applied to believers, no less than in such expressions as "born again" (*ἀναγεννησθαι*, 1 Pet. i. 3), "born from above" (*γεννησθαι ἄνωθεν*, John iii. 3), "born of God" or "of the Spirit" (*ἐκ Θεοῦ*, John i. 13, or *ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος*, iii. 5, 6). We find it also in such representations as that of the "new man" into which believers have been renewed, having put off the old man which is corrupt (Eph. iv. 22 ff.; comp. Rom. vi. 6), "the inward man" (*ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, Rom. vii. 22; Eph. iii. 16; Col. iii. 9; comp. 2 Cor. iv. 16), "the renewing of the mind" (*ἡ ἀνακάλυψις τοῦ νοός*, Rom. xii. 2; Tit. iii. 5), by which they have been transformed, etc. It is also involved in their being described as being converted, as having repented, as having passed from death unto life, as having been delivered from the power of darkness, as being turned from darkness to light, as having put on light, as having been illuminated, etc. All these relate substantially to the same object of thought, and present it under various similitudes and in different aspects. They leave us in no doubt either as to the fact itself which they set forth, or as to the importance attached to it as a part of the great work of human redemption.

Without attempting any formal definition of regeneration or dealing in any merely general illustrations, I would now proceed to examine one or two of those descriptions of it which occur in the N. T., and from which a just and full conception of its nature may be obtained.

One general remark only I would premise, viz. that the change which takes place in regeneration, in its stricter sense, or, as I would for the sake of avoiding confusion prefer to call it, renewal, is not a physical, but a moral and spiritual change. No alteration takes place on the mental constitution, no addition is made to the mental faculties, nor are any new laws imposed on their operation; and if it be that after conversion there often happens to the individual an accession of mental vigour and perspicacity, this is to be traced rather to the free exercise of the mind on high and important subjects than to the immediate operation of any change

effected in conversion. The strong figures used in Scripture to denote this change might lead to the conclusion that a change in the actual substance of our inner nature was intended. But it is not so. "It is called a new creation," says Basil the Great, referring to the strongest perhaps of these figures, "not because another creature is formed, but because those who are illuminated are prepared for better works."<sup>1</sup> At the same time it is not any slight or superficial or merely outward change that is intended by such phraseology. Scripture speaks of men receiving a new nature, and of being made partakers of a divine nature when they are regenerated and born of God. But whilst this *θεία φύσις* is not the actual nature of God, of which none can partake, whilst it is not a new mental constitution, a reconstructed physical nature; so neither, on the other hand, is it a mere improvement in outward character and action to which the man is brought. It is the implantation in the soul of a new spiritual *principle*, which is divine, not only as produced by the Spirit of God in the soul, but as itself divine, being of the same kind with that which is in God, "a habitual holy principle wrought in us by God and bearing His image."<sup>2</sup> "Nature is an abiding permanent principle carrying on the things which it is to act accordingly. We are not partakers of God's nature essentially, therefore not as a nature, otherwise than as having His likeness or image in divine qualities stamped upon us, and so becoming like to Him, to be holy as He is holy, which makes us fit to have fellowship with Him. . . . And this new nature denotes a stable and permanent being in the soul, as also a principle of working, or it were not truly a nature."<sup>3</sup>

In the N. T. this change which men experience when they are made sons of God is described by various phrases. Some of these I would now proceed to examine.

In Eph. iv. 22-25 the apostle says to believers, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation [mode of life] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" [rather, "according to the lusts of the deceit," the lusts which the deceit has and produces, the deceit being the sinful prin-

<sup>1</sup> *Contr. Eunom.*, t. ii. p. 105, cited by Suicer, *Theas. Eccles.*, s.v. *κρίσις*.

<sup>2</sup> Owen, *Works*, vol. iii. p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Goodwin, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 193.

ciple in men, of which the apostle says, Rom. vii. 11, that sin taking occasion of the commandment *deceived* him, and by it slew him]; "and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The apostle here exhorts Christians to seek and aim at the continuance and completion of that great transformation which commenced in their spiritual renewal and re-creation. The expressions of which it chiefly concerns us here to take note are the expression "renewed in the spirit of your mind," and the expression "the new man, which after God was created in righteousness and true holiness."

The former of these is a peculiar expression, occurring nowhere else in the N. T., and interpreters are not agreed as to its meaning. As to the word "renewed" (*ἀνανεοῦσθαι*) there is no difficulty or difference of opinion; all unite in explaining it as meaning "a making new," a renewing, not in the sense of a restoring of man to the state in which he was before the fall, but in the sense of giving him a new spiritual nature, different from that which he previously had. This renewal the apostle elsewhere (Tit. iii. 5) identifies with regeneration, and ascribes to the operation of the Spirit of God. By this men cease to be in the flesh and come to be in the Spirit; and without this no man is really and truly in Christ (Rom. viii. 9). It is in the words added to this by the apostle that the difficulty lies. Christians, he says, are renewed in the spirit of their mind, *τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ νοῦς ὑμῶν*. What are we to understand by this? Assuming that the *πνεῦμα τοῦ νοῦς* cannot be taken as merely equivalent to *ὁ νοῦς*, and that "the spirit of the mind" must be something more than simply the mind itself, some take the dative here as the dative of instrument, and understand by *πνεῦμα* the Holy Spirit, and by the genitive the genitive of subject, so that the phrase would mean "by the Spirit which is of your mind, which your mind receives," "*qui animo vestro datus est.*" "This," says Meyer, "is the Holy Ghost, which, communicated to men, has its seat in the *νοῦς* and effects the *ἀνακαίνωσις τοῦ νοῦς* (Rom. xii. 2), so that there is no longer the old *ματαιότης* of the *νοῦς* (Eph. iv. 17), and that *καينότης* which takes its place is a *καينότης τοῦ πνεύματος*



(Rom. vi. 4, vii. 6)." But though it is undoubtedly true that the Divine Spirit is the agent by whom this renewal of the mind is effected, it seems impossible to accept such an explanation of the peculiar phrase "spirit of your mind" as that above given. It is inconceivable that the apostle should have called the Spirit of God the spirit of the mind of believers. Had he said "the Spirit that dwelleth in you," or "the Spirit that worketh in you," or any similar phrase, there could have been no doubt as to the meaning; but to make the phrase "the spirit of your minds" equivalent to these seems wholly arbitrary and unauthorized.

In other parts of Scripture the spirit appears as a part or sphere of the mind according to the tripartite division of man into body, soul, and spirit; and it is this which, I apprehend, the apostle has here in view. Regarding the spirit as the nobler part, the commanding and directive part of man's inner nature, he intends by "the spirit of the mind" that which regulates, controls, and characterizes the man as an intelligent and moral agent, his higher mental nature, his reason, and his will. The renewal of the spirit of the mind would thus be much the same in effect as what the apostle elsewhere calls simply the renewing of the mind (*τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοός*, Rom. xii. 2), whereby men are so transformed that from being conformed to this world they are conformed to the mind and will of God; for the renewal of the higher and directive part of the mind is essentially the renewal of the mind as a whole. This renewal manifests itself in that newness of spirit in which men serve God (Rom. vii. 6), and that newness of life in which those that are in Christ are raised to walk.

Regeneration, then, is a renewal of the man in the ruling power of his mind. As already observed, it is not a change in the constitution of the mind, or in any of the natural laws according to which it acts. What is changed is the spirit of the mind, the dominant tendency, the prevailing character and ruling power of his mind. The man continues to think and feel and will according to the same laws and by the exercise of the same faculties as before, but his thinking, feeling, and willing are not the same as before. His mind itself in its substance and nature is not changed; but the bias of his mind, so to speak, is changed; and just as a bowl

which under a given bias tends to the left as it rolls along will, when that bias is reversed, as naturally tend to the right; so does the mind, which under its original bias tended to evil and ungodliness, when it is renewed and thereby brought under a new bias, tend to what is good and holy and godlike. The prejudices which obscured the mental vision in the direction of the things of God have been cleared away, and in God's light the man is brought to see light clearly. The evil tastes and passions that enslaved the mind are put down and mortified so that the mind can freely apprehend truth and yield itself to its sway. In place of a predominant inclination to the things of sense and of the world, there is implanted in the mind a supreme tendency towards God and the things of God. The prevailing mental character of the man is changed. He has become a man of another spirit. He has received a new heart and a right spirit. He is renewed in the spirit of his mind. He is regenerated by the renewal of the Holy Ghost.

This renewal the apostle further describes as a putting on of the new man, *i.e.* the new spiritual nature bestowed in regeneration, which after God was created in righteousness and holiness of truth. The aorist here (*κτισθέντα*) indicates that the nature referred to was once for all formed in the individual; he is not speaking here of a general fact which is continually exemplified, but of a fact brought to pass in the experience of each individual believer in the past. When regenerated, the new man was then inspired within him, was then after God created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. The allusion is to man's having been first formed at his creation in the image and after the likeness of God. That consisted chiefly in the conformation of his spiritual and moral nature and character to God, in his being capable of intelligence and invested with goodness, like God, the only absolutely wise and the only absolutely good. Like his Maker, man could discern the excellency of moral goodness, could discriminate between good and evil, could love the good and hate the evil, could live in the pure enjoyment of goodness. This man had in virtue of his creation by God. And what man thus could do, he did in his primordial state. The life of Adam in Paradise was but a child's life at best; but it was

the life of an intelligent, pure, and holy child—a life of reverence and love to God, and of undeviating righteousness and holiness. And it is to this that man the sinner has to be brought back; not, indeed, to the child-life of Eden,—that is neither possible nor desirable,—but to something higher, though of the same kind, in the fully developed manhood of his intelligence,—to the moral purity, rectitude, and holiness which characterized him in his primeval condition. And as it was by his being created in the image and likeness of God at first that he came into this condition, so it is by his being created anew after the same image and likeness that he is to be restored to this condition which he has lost through sin. So the apostle expresses it here and in other passages, as, for instance, Col. iii. 10, where believers are said to have “put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image (*κατ’ εἰκόνα*) of Him that created him.”

The change, then, which is effected when men are renewed in the spirit of their mind consists in their being created after God, after His image and likeness, in righteousness and holiness of the truth. By this latter expression is not to be understood, as our translators have put it, true as opposed to pretended or spurious holiness, but that holiness which is of the truth, which springs from and is sustained by the truth, as opposed to the *ἐπιθυμίαι τῆς ἀμαρτίας*, the lusts engendered and sustained by the deceit, the falsehood of sin, according to which the apostle says, in a preceding verse, the old man becomes corrupt. For this end the man is created of God anew. He has implanted in him a vital principle which gradually transforms him, so that from having borne the image of the earthly, he comes to bear the image of the heavenly. Born of God, the righteous and the holy, he is prepared to love righteousness and to follow after holiness. With him the old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His moral discernment is quickened. He is made of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. He has his senses exercised to discern between good and evil. The love of goodness becomes a master power in his soul, so that he is led to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good. In outward appearance the man remains the same; but inwardly, in that which constitutes his proper self, he

is so changed that he may be fittingly designated "a new creature."

In a passage already cited (Col. iii. 10) the apostle supplies another element in this renewal which is effected when a man is made a child of God. He there says that such have put on the new man which is renewed, goes on being renewed, unto full knowledge after the image of Him that created it, *i.e.* the new man (*τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν*). The idea of the apostle here seems to be this. Proceeding on the assumption that the image of God in which man was at first made is the pattern, the fair ideal, the perfect model, to which man is to be conformed, he intimates that it is by his obtaining and realizing full knowledge of God, knowledge corresponding to and accordant with the image of God, that this end is to be attained by man; and that in order to this man needs to be under a constant renewing influence. There is a renewal, therefore, which has reference to the contents of the mind as well as a renewal of the spirit of the mind. And this relates not so much to the putting into the mind of new thoughts, new ideas, new information, as to the giving to the mind of that spiritual discernment and apprehension of divine things by which truth already revealed—and it may be long known in statement—is brought home to the mind with power, so as to exert an influence over it in all its faculties and susceptibilities. It is a truth too little, perhaps, realized by men in general, that for the right and full apprehension of spiritual knowledge there needs a special spiritual discernment. Just as men may observe the Lord's Supper without discerning therein the Lord's body, so may they receive revealed truth without discerning anything beyond the outward form in which it is conveyed. And as in this way the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit, so there needs the creating of a new man within, a man formed after the image of God, in order that the true knowledge of God may be rightly and fully apprehended by men. There is nothing strange in this. Truth is never fully apprehended or rightly appreciated except where the mind is in some degree in sympathy with it. If we dislike any object, we are almost sure to misapprehend the truth concerning it; and as man in his natural state

is at enmity with God, he is averse from all divine truth, and so either wholly rejects it when it is presented to him, or receives it in such a way as to be wholly unaffected by it, or it may be to be wrongly affected by it. Men speculating upon divine things often arrive at conclusions the very opposite of those which God authorizes and would have us to reach. Men with the Bible in their hands, and well acquainted with its statements, often err, not knowing the truth or the power of God. And as all are naturally subject to this blinding and perverting influence, there is a necessity for a renewal of the mind in order to the just apprehension, the right appreciation, and the proper use of divine knowledge. As the apostle here expresses it, we need a renewal *for* (*eis*), *with a view to*, full knowledge; only thus can this be acquired by us. But when this renewal is effected in a man, the truth of God comes to be seen by him as it really is in all its integrity and purity; it is apprehended by him in its power; it is really received into the mind, and, as it were, incorporated with it. And as the mind is most affected by the truths it most dwells on, is moulded by the truths it most realizes and is most familiar with, and as the truths which God has revealed to us are the expression of His own mind, it cannot but follow that the mind which becomes pervaded by and assimilated to these truths should gradually grow into the image and likeness of God.

To the same effect is another expression of the apostle in reference to this change. "God, who is rich in mercy," he says (Eph. ii. 4, 5), "for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here, as elsewhere in Scripture, man in his natural state is represented as dead in or by sins. This does not refer to his being under condemnation and so virtually dead in law, nor does it imply any physical deficiency or absence of vitality; it relates to that insensibility to divine and spiritual things which characterizes the natural man, and which in the total collapse of the spiritual energies may be justly described as a state of death. Man in his natural state possesses all the faculties by which he may perceive and appreciate divine things; but through sin these faculties are rendered inert, they are benumbed and stupefied, and so cannot

act; just as a corpse may retain unimpaired the form and symmetry of the living body, but lies motionless and torpid because of the absence of the vital energy by which alone it is capable of activity. Through evil disposition, by reason of a depraved heart, man is insensible to the beauty and unconscious of the worth of the things of God; and so he will continue until this disposition is changed, and a new principle of holiness and godliness is brought to rule within him. When this takes place the man is, in the language of the apostle, quickened, vivified, endued with life (*ζωοποιῶθεις*). No new faculty is given him; no constitutional change is wrought upon him. But he now sees, as he did not see before, the things of God; he is animated with new desires; he is impelled with new motives; and no longer lifeless and inert, he is seen quick to understand and active to do the will of God. This new "spiritual sense," as President Edwards has described it, "is not a new faculty of understanding, but a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new kind of exercise of the same faculty of understanding;" and "that new holy disposition that attends this new sense is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new exercise of the same faculty of will."<sup>1</sup>

(2.) Such is regeneration in the limited application of that term. Thus defined, it is seen to be not essentially different from that *μετάνοια εἰς τὸν Θεόν* which the apostles preached to men along with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xx. 21), and that *μετάνοια εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας* which God giveth unto men (2 Tim. ii. 25). This word *μετάνοια* is rendered in the A. V. by *repentance*, and the cognate verb *μετανοεῖν* by "to repent." In this our translators have followed the Vulgate, which renders *μετάνοια* by *pœnitentia*, and *μετανοεῖν* by *pœniteri*, *pœnitentiam agere*, *pœnitentiam habere*. This is unfortunate, because a wrong concept of the subject is thus introduced into the mind. Penitence and repentance express properly the feeling of sorrow and pain arising from the consciousness of having erred or done something wrong; but this is not the meaning, at least not the proper meaning, of *μετάνοια*. This, a compound of *μετά* and *νοῦς*, properly denotes a change of mind which may be accompanied by a feeling of

<sup>1</sup> *Religious Affections*, Pt. iii. § 1.

regret or sorrow or pain, but is not necessarily so followed. When a man changes from error to truth, from sin to virtue, from a foolish course to a wise one, he will naturally feel grieved and vexed and ashamed that he should ever have gone in the way from which he has now turned; and this feeling may in certain cases be very poignant and overwhelming. But a man may change his mind without any such painful emotions being thereby excited in him; and it is to the change itself, and not to any feelings that may accompany or follow it, that the word *μετάνοια* refers. In an ancient Greek lexicon<sup>1</sup> it is defined as *γνησία ἀπὸ πταίσματος ἐπὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἀγαθὸν ἐπιστροφή*. By the classical writers the verb *μετανοεῖν* is used in this sense. Thus Diodorus Siculus says (xv. 47), *μετενόησεν ὁ δῆμος*, "The people changed their mind (purpose);" Xenophon, after adducing certain facts which he had taken into consideration, says, *ἐκ τούτου δὴ ἠνεγκαζόμεθα μετανοεῖν*, "hence we were compelled to change our mind (opinion);"<sup>2</sup> Polybius, after saying that Darius had purposed to fight with Alexander, adds, *ὑστερον δὲ μετανοῆσαι*, "but afterwards changed his mind (intention)." In the O. T. the verb is frequently used of God; as, *e.g.*, 1 Sam. xv. 29, where the LXX. have *καὶ οὐκ ἀποστρέψει οὐδὲ μετανοήσει ὅτι οὐκ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶ τοῦ μετανοῆσαι αὐτός*; and Jer. iv. 28, *δίῃτι ἐλάλησα καὶ οὐ μετανοήσω*, where in both instances the Hebrew has *נחם*, which, though primarily signifying "to be grieved," is often used where only change of mind or purpose is intended. In one passage in the N. T. the synonymous word in its adjectival form, *μεταμέλητος* with the *a* primitive prefixed, is used in reference to God: Rom. xi. 29, *ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ Θεοῦ*, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," *i.e.* without change of purpose; they are certain and irrevocable. In several passages *μετάνοια* is used of men where only a change of this sort is intended; as, *e.g.*, Matt. iii. 8, "bring forth fruit *ἄξιον τῆς μετάνοιας*," fruit such as befits and is a worthy index of a change of mind from error and evil to truth and goodness; 2 Cor. vii. 9, "Now I rejoice, not that ye grieved, but that ye grieved *εἰς μετάνοιαν*," grieved so as to be brought

<sup>1</sup> *Lex. Cyrilli, MS. Brem.*, cited by Schleusner, *Lex. Vet. Test.* ii. 448.

<sup>2</sup> *Cyrop.*, i. 1. 3.

to a change of sentiment and conduct; Heb. xii. 17, "For he [Esau] did not find *τόπον μετανόας*," a place of change of mind, *i.e.* a means of changing the mind and purpose of his father, so as to recall the blessing from Jacob and confer it on himself.

The *μετάνοια εἰς Θεόν*, then, which the apostles preached in conjunction with the *πίστις ἢ εἰς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν*, is that change of mind which we have already seen is described as a renewing in the spirit of the mind, a creating after the image of God in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Elsewhere it is called *μετάνοια εἰς ζωήν*, "a change of mind unto life," inasmuch as by undergoing this change men pass from death unto life, from the death of sin to the life of holiness; and this God is said to give to men (Acts xi. 18, "To the Gentiles also hath God given the change of mind unto life"). This change of mind is regeneration. The only difference between the two is that regeneration designates the effect from a reference to its cause, while *μετάνοια* designates it with respect to its nature. It is a being born of God, because He effects it in the man; it is a *μετάνοια*, because it is a change in the mind and soul of the man.

The change thus designated is not to be identified with conversion. Conversion is the fruit or result of regeneration, renewal or mind-change; when the man is born again, renewed in the spirit of his mind, changed in mind and heart, he then naturally turns from what he previously loved and followed to a new course of aim and pursuit. The word "conversion" is found only once in Scripture, Acts xv. 3, where we read that Paul and Barnabas on their way from Antioch to Jerusalem passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion (*ἐπιστροφήν*) of the Gentiles; but the cognate verb frequently occurs. Usually it is used intransitively, or it has a reflex sense. Thus Zech. i. 3, "Turn (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψατε*) unto me, and I will turn unto you;" Ezek. xviii. 32, "Turn yourselves (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψατε*) and live;" Isa. vi. 10, "Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψωσι*), and be healed;" Acts iii. 19, "Repent and convert, or turn (*μετανοήσατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε*), unto the blotting out of your sins," etc. In a few instances



the verb is used transitively, as Ps. xix. 7, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;" Jas. v. 19, 20, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death," etc. Occasionally, also, the passive occurs, but with a reflex meaning, as John xx. 14, "She turned herself back" (ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω); Acts vii. 39, "And in their hearts turned back again (ἐστράφησαν) unto Egypt," etc. This determines the meaning of the verb in Matt. xviii. 3, "Except ye be converted, *i.e.* unless ye turn from your ambitious and worldly aims and views, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and Luke xxii. 32, "When thou art converted, *i.e.* when thou returnest to a right mind," etc.

It appears, then, that conversion refers to that change of thought, opinion, aim, and conduct which a man makes under a conviction that his former views, opinions, and actings were unwise or wrong. Conversion, therefore, is rather the result and outcome of regeneration than regeneration itself. It is what a man is led to through the renewal of his mind. The new nature which is implanted in the soul is to be regarded as a seed or principle which develops itself in certain manifestations, which produces certain fruits, and of these conversion is one. And as this seed is a vital principle, it manifests itself by the growth of those qualities and virtues of which it is the germ. Hence believers are said to grow in grace, to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, to have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. They have that life abiding in them; and so having the actuating principle of the divine life within, they walk in newness of life, and advance ever onward to that grace of perfect life of which they are now the heirs.

"The work of the Spirit of God," says Owen, "in regenerating the souls of men, is diligently to be inquired into by the preachers of the gospel, and all to whom the word is dispensed. For the former sort there is a peculiar reason for their attendance unto this duty; for they are used and employed in the work itself by the Spirit of God, and are by Him made instrumental for the effecting of this new birth

and life. . . . And this is the principal end of their ministry. Now, certainly it is the duty of ministers to understand the work about which they are employed, as far as they are able, that they may not work in the dark, and fight uncertainly as men beating the air. What Scripture hath revealed concerning it, as to its nature and the manner of its operation, as to its causes, effects, fruits, evidences, they ought diligently to inquire into. To be spiritually skilled therein is one of the principal furnishings of any for the work of the ministry, without which they will never be able to divide the word aright, nor show themselves workmen that need not be ashamed.

"It is likewise the duty of all to whom the word is preached to inquire also into it. It is unto such to whom the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?' It is the concernment of all individual Christians or professors of the Christian religion to try and examine themselves what work of the Spirit of God there hath been upon their hearts; and none will deter them from it but those who have a design to hoodwink them to perdition."<sup>1</sup> Pastors and teachers, therefore, whose aim it is to save the souls of those who hear them should urge men to such self-examination; and in order to this they should be careful themselves to understand the nature and be cognizant of the fruits of regeneration, that so they may rightly direct their hearers in this great and needful exercise of self-examination.

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<sup>1</sup> *Work of the Spirit. Works*, iii. 227.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

3. *Justification.*

Having considered regeneration as the complex of the two great blessings of justification and sanctification, we now proceed to consider these separately.

The doctrine of justification is one which occupies a very prominent place in the scheme of revealed truth. Perhaps more than any other doctrine, it enters into the very essence of Christianity as a religious system; and certain it is that our views of doctrine generally, and, I may say, the whole cast and character of our religious life, will be materially affected by the views we entertain on this subject. As the question, How shall a man be just before God? presents to us the great problem of religion, it cannot but follow that on our answer to that question must depend, to a very high degree, what kind of religion we really hold and follow. Luther was wont to say that justification by faith alone was the "*articulus cadentis vel stantis ecclesiæ*," the article by which the Church falls or stands; and we generalize his assertion, and say that the doctrine of justification as a whole is that by which Christian belief and Christian practice stand or fall.

In seeking to lay before you just and scriptural views on this all-important subject, I propose to follow the usual order, and to consider, first, the nature of justification; secondly, the ground of it; and thirdly, the medium of it.

(1.) *The Nature of Justification.* The question here brought before us is, In what does this blessing consist? what are its characteristic elements and features?

a. The word "justification" occurs only three times in the Authorized Version; in Rom. iv. 25, v. 16, 18. In the first and third of these passages the word *δικαίωσις* is used, in the second *δικαίωμα* occurs. There is a slight difference of meaning between these two, the one denoting the act of pronouncing a favourable legal sentence, the other denoting the favourable sentence actually pronounced. But this difference does not

affect the general significance of the passages, in all of which the same great truth is asserted, that through the work of Christ a provision has been made for the pronouncing of a favourable sentence on those on whom condemnation had been brought by sin.

Both *δικαίωσις* and *δικαίωμα* are derivations of the verb *δικαίω*, and this is frequently used in the N. T., as well as in the Greek translation of the Old.<sup>1</sup> In the latter it represents more than one Hebrew word, but its proper synonym is the verb *פָּטַח*, especially in the Piel and Hiphil conjugations. As used by the sacred writers, it denotes to acquit, to absolve, to show or manifest to be righteous, to declare righteous, to treat as righteous. Thus, God is said to be justified (Ps. li. 4; Luke vii. 29; Rom. iii. 4), by which can only be meant that the perfect rectitude of all His doings is manifested or vindicated; and in the same sense our Saviour is said to be justified (1 Tim. iii. 16); and Wisdom is said to be justified of her children: in all these cases the word conveys the idea of a declaring something to be in reality what it claims to be. In a similar sense Scripture speaks of judges justifying the righteous, *i.e.* vindicating and declaring the man to be what in the eye of the law he really is, a just and blameless man. So, on the other hand, to justify the wicked is to pronounce lawful and right those evil courses in which he has indulged, and thereby to pervert the right. In all such cases we have the word used in its proper and direct sense, that of pronouncing a favourable sentence on any being whose character or conduct has been brought into question.

Now, in this sense it is clearly impossible that man can be justified before God. "The Scripture hath concluded all men under sin;" "there is none righteous, no, not one." As God therefore, the perfectly holy and just, will not pervert rectitude by justifying the wicked or clearing by an untrue sentence him who is guilty, it follows either that there is no justification for man as a sinner at all, or that justification is affirmed of him in some other than its primary, proper, and direct sense. The former part of this alternative no one can embrace; for it is again and again declared in the most explicit terms that God justifies the sinner. We are shut up, there-

<sup>1</sup> See Schleusner, *Lex. in LXX.*

fore, to the latter side of the alternative, and must find a sense in which it may without untruth be said that God justifies the ungodly. But there is but one sense which satisfies this condition, viz. that in which to justify means to treat as just or righteous on some sufficient ground those who in themselves are not righteous, and on the ground of their own merits can be treated only as guilty. It is granted that no instance can be adduced of the word justify being used in this sense apart from the case of God's dealing with the sinner; but if this be urged as an objection against our giving the word this meaning in that connection, it may suffice to reply that when words are used in peculiar applications they naturally acquire peculiar meanings, and that this is the only meaning which the word "justify" in such a connection will bear.

It is worthy of notice, however, that whilst Scripture speaks of men as being justified, it never speaks of them as possessing justification. It is nowhere said that we receive from God or enjoy *justification* (δικαίωσις or δικαίωμα). When Scripture would describe the state corresponding to the act of justifying, and actually enjoyed by those who are justified, it employs another word, the word usually translated in the A. V. "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη). Thus we are said to have righteousness imputed to us; to receive the gift of righteousness, to have attained unto righteousness, etc., and in one instance even the strong expression is used that we are "made righteousness" (Rom. iv. 6, 11, v. 17, ix. 30; 2 Cor. v. 21). Now it is possible to press this distinction too far, so as to extort from it unscriptural conclusions; but, on the other hand, it has been by much too generally neglected or overlooked. There must be some significancy in an invariable usage of words by the sacred writers, and when we find them consequently always speaking of righteousness and never of justification as the blessing actually enjoyed by men through Christ, we should at least pause to inquire whether there may not lie under this some valuable truth.

It may be further observed, that in order to take a full and comprehensive view of this subject, we must not confine our attention to the words "justify" and "righteousness," or the passages in which they occur, but must advert also to other terms used in Scripture to describe the state into which men

are brought through Christ by the regenerating Spirit. We find, for instance, this state described by the term life; and though this may include in its widest sense more than is included in justification and righteousness, it always imports this much at least, and in some of its usages imports this exclusively; as, *e.g.*, when the effect of Christ's righteousness is said to have been on all men unto "justification of life," when believers are said to "reign in life through Christ Jesus," and when it is said "the spirit is life because of righteousness." We find also the term purify or cleanse (*καθαρίζειν*) used to describe this state, as when it is said "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us (*καθαρίζει*) from all sin;" when God is said to cleanse us "from all unrighteousness," and to purify men by faith; when the blood of Christ is said to "purge the conscience from dead works," etc. (1 John i. 7, 9; Acts xv. 9; Heb. ix. 14). It is to this state also that the apostle refers when he uses the remarkable expression, "to make perfect as pertaining to the conscience;" this, he says, the ancient sacrifices could not do; but this he intimates Christ has done for us when "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. ix. 9, 12). And in this last-cited passage we have still another term used by the sacred writers to describe the state into which the gospel brings those who receive it—redemption. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." "We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 13; Eph. i. 7; Rom. iii. 24).

*b.* Now, putting these statements of Scripture together, and seeking to gather from them all that they teach, we may obtain a full and clear view of the nature of the blessing to which they relate.

(*a.*) In the first place, they teach us to distinguish between justification as an act and justification as a state. As an act it imports the removal of a sentence; as a state it imports the enjoyment of a blessing. Under the one aspect it means that the sinner is declared to be or is treated as righteous; under the other it means that the sinner actually enjoys righteousness. In virtue of the one we can say, "There is no more curse;" in virtue of the other we can say, "We are

made the righteousness of God." The one is the repeal of the sentence of death; the other is the realization of life.

(b.) There seems ground in Scripture for distinguishing between an universal justification and a particular justification. There are two things that seem to me to have been to a great extent overlooked by systematic theologians on this subject; the one is that Scripture, in speaking of justification, speaks of it as a *past* thing, a thing done and not to be repeated; the other is that Scripture expressly says that the justification which has come through Christ has come upon all men. As respects the former of these points, I need only remind you of the constant language of the apostle to believers: "Ye are justified," "*having been* justified," "*being* justified by His blood," etc., where the turn of the expression is plainly such as to indicate that the justifying act is one done in the past. It is true that this phraseology leaves it uncertain whether the reference is to an act done once for all in the case of the race, or to an act done once for all in the case of the individual; and probably some of the passages in which it is used may refer to the one and some to the other. But no ambiguity attaches to such a statement as the following: "Who was delivered for (*i.e.* 'because of,' *διὰ* with the accusative) our offences, and was raised again because of our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Here the apostle plainly states that our offences were the cause or reason of Christ's having been given up as a sacrificial victim, and that our being justified was the cause or reason of His being raised again. Now, as the cause must precede the effect, we must regard our justification as a thing actually realized and secured before our Lord's resurrection, in the same sense as our offences were a reality leading to His being delivered up for us. Had no offences been committed, Christ would not have died; and had our justification not been accomplished by His death, He would not have been raised from the dead. "The original words," says Bishop Horsley, "are without ambiguity, and clearly represent our Lord's resurrection as an event which took place *in consequence* of man's justification, in the same manner as His death took place *in consequence* of man's sins. It follows, therefore," he adds, "that our justification is a thing totally different from the final salvation of

the godly"<sup>1</sup>—and also, he might have added, "from the believer's present state of personal acceptance with God." When the explicit statement of this passage is considered, we shall readily conclude that when Paul says that men are "justified freely by grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus," and when he exclaims, "being justified by His blood we shall be saved by His life," his reference is not to righteousness as a personal possession, but rather to justification as an act reaching to men universally.

This brings me to notice the explicit statements of Scripture on this point. And here I have simply to remind you that in *all* the passages in which the term justification is used, it is expressly set forth as a blessing secured by Christ for all men. In the passage just cited, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," the qualifying pronoun "our" before "justification" cannot be restricted so as to include only believers, for if we do so we must equally restrict the "our" before "offences" in the parallel clause; and in that case we make the apostle teach that it was only the offenders of the saved on account of which Christ died—a doctrine which can never be reconciled with the express declaration that He was the propitiation for the sins of the world. In the other two passages the words of the apostle are explicit: "The judgment is by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offenders unto justification;" "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Nothing can be clearer than this. As is the condemnation, so is the justification; the one is co-extensive with the other; as the offence of one brought all men under the former, so the righteousness of one has brought all men under the latter.

Attempts have been made to explain away this statement of the apostle, and his express assertion that Christ's righteousness has had an effect upon all men unto justification, has been diluted into an assertion that the offer or means of justification have been brought within the reach of all men. But not only is this an unwarrantable liberty to use with

<sup>1</sup> *Nine Sermons on our Lord's Resurrection*, pp. 262-3.



Holy Scripture, putting into it what is not there, and saying for the apostle what he could as easily have said for himself had such been his intention; but by this alteration of his statement we materially dislocate the whole tenor of his teaching here. His design is obviously to show that the righteousness of Christ, in its restorative and redemptive influence, stands up in complete parallel to the transgression of Adam in its destructive influence on the race, nay, goes beyond it by securing greater benefits than it entailed evils. Now he has shown that by Adam's sin all men have become subject to condemnation—to penal consequences apart from and anterior to any act of their own. But if, in this respect, Adam was the type of Him who was to come, it is obvious that the work of the latter must be at least commensurate with that of the former. An antitype may have more in it than the type, but it cannot have less; and if Jesus Christ was the antitype of Adam in the respect mentioned, there must be in his work an effect reaching to all men, so as to undo and remove the evil which from Adam's sin has accrued to all. If this is not done, He has failed of accomplishing all that the apostle's argument renders it necessary He should have done. If the sin of the first man has placed all the race under an attainder, then obviously the very first step towards an adequate reparation of this is the removal from all the race of this disability. If Adam's sin brought on all his posterity an actual evil, it is no undoing of this merely to make it *possible* for them to get the better of this evil. Unless, then, we would destroy the very main point and essence of the apostle's argument here, we must take his words as they stand, and receive it as a scriptural doctrine that through the righteousness of Christ all men are justified.

This doctrine has been rendered offensive to many from its being mixed up in some quarters with the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and in others from its being produced in the form of the doctrine of universal pardon. Had the doctrine of baptismal regeneration merely meant that in baptism there was a symbolical representation and memorial of the truth that all men have been delivered from the curse brought on them by Adam, I do not know that any serious objection could have been brought against it, or that it would

have proved very offensive to any one. But when it was taught that baptism actually *effected* this deliverance for an individual, still more when it was taught that baptism made the subject of it a member of the body of Christ and of a renewed moral nature, the limits of scriptural teaching were grossly passed, and just cause of offence was given to those who sought to conform their religious belief and practice to its dictates. As for the doctrine of universal pardon, it is difficult to know what the terms imply. If it be intended by them to assert merely that the effect of our Saviour's work has been to put all men into a salvable state, the idea is wrongly expressed, for there is in this case no pardon at all, but simply a placing of men where they may obtain pardon; but if the statement be intended to assert that men universally have received the pardon of their actual sins, this must mean that sin is pardoned before it is committed, so that, in point of fact, there is no actual guilt or condemnation resting upon any of the race. If the doctrine of universal justification be identified with this doctrine, it is not to be wondered at that men of sober minds should turn from it with aversion. But, as taught by the apostle, it stands clear both of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and the doctrine of universal pardon. It means simply that through the grace of Christ the sentence of attainder under which the sin of Adam brought men has been repealed in the case of every man, whether baptized or unbaptized; but that for the sins which men actually commit, they must each one seek pardon for himself, and find it or perish.

This brings me to observe that whilst there is thus an universal justification, there is also a particular justification. This is what the N. T. writers more particularly denote when they speak of our being justified by faith, or of the sinner becoming justified before God; and the state which ensues upon this is what they intend by righteousness as possessed by the believer, or by a state of life, a condition of redemption, a being cleansed and purged from sin by the blood of Christ. That they should call this a state of righteousness rather than a state of justification, will be felt at once to be appropriate if we reflect on the fact that justification, from the nature of the case, cannot be continuous. It is a thing

which once done needs not to be repeated; it abides, and the man once benefited thereby retains the benefit. The proper condition of the man who is in a right relation with law and government is a condition of righteousness; he is properly, *quoad hoc*, a righteous man. To say that he was in a state of justification would be to say that he was continually having the justifying act repeated upon him. The accurate thinking of the apostle is thus manifest in the discriminative phraseology by which he conveys his teaching.

(c.) Both the justification of the sinner and the righteousness into which he thereby enters is of a legal character. With respect to the former of these there is no room for dispute or doubt. The verb "justify" (*δικαίω*) and the noun "justification" (*δικαίωσις* and *δικαίωμα*) formed from it are forensic words, and no clear instance can be adduced of their ever being used save in a forensic sense. By most, therefore, it is agreed that justification properly so called is the legal act of pronouncing or accounting a man exempt from the penal consequence of sin, whether of all men from the penal consequence of Adam's sin, or of each man from the penal consequence of his own. But the case is not so clear in reference to the righteousness or state of life in which the justified man stands. There can be no question that the word translated "righteousness" properly denotes personal righteousness, moral goodness, and that it is frequently so used in the N. T. From this some have been led to conclude that the righteousness which we enjoy through faith—that state into which we enter when we pass from death to life, is a state not having respect to legal position and relations, but to moral character and conduct; so that when we are said to possess *δικαιοσύνη* or to be in a state of *δικαιοσύνη*, it is concluded that the reference is to the possession of personal rectitude or goodness, to a state, in short, of moral rather than of legal rightness. It is not easy to see what is gained by this, so long as it is admitted that the verb *δικαίω* is capable only of a forensic sense. If *δικαιοσύνη* be the result to us of God's forensically justifying us, it seems only a dispute about words to contend for its having a moral rather than a forensic meaning. But, apart from this, the usage of the term in several places is such as

to fix it to a forensic meaning. Thus in Rom. i. 17, 18, it stands as describing a state opposed to wrath. Now, as to be under the divine wrath is to be under the condemning sentence and exposed to the threatened penalty of the divine law, that *δικαιοσύνη* which is the antithesis of this can only be a state of legal or forensic absolution or deliverance from guilt and penalty. Again, when the apostle, as he frequently does, contrasts the *δικαιοσύνη* which the Jew sought by the law with the *δικαιοσύνη* which is by faith, the latter must be understood in a forensic sense to make it the true antithesis to the former; that which the Jew sought through the law was not moral goodness, but acceptance with God; this was his idea of a state of *δικαιοσύνη*,—a state in which he was exempt from blame, and being so enjoyed the favour of God; and as Paul says that what he thus sought but did not gain by the law has been obtained by Christians through faith (Rom. ix. 30, 31), we must understand the *δικαιοσύνη* of the latter of legal and not of moral justification. Once more, when Paul says (2 Cor. iii. 9), "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more shall the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory," he contrasts the characteristic of the O. T. with that of the New. But if the one was a ministration of condemnation, that which is the antithesis of this must be a ministration of acquittal. So also, when Paul says that Christ was "made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," the righteousness of which he speaks being opposed to a state of imputed sin, *i.e.* a state in which one was held as guilty, must mean a state of legal exemption from guilt, of legal justification. Whilst, therefore, it is admitted that *δικαιοσύνη* often refers to moral state, it is also plain that the apostles used it to refer to legal state; and we must in every case determine from the context in which sense it is to be taken.

(2.) Having thus ascertained the *nature* of justification, we have next to inquire into the *grounds* or *reasons* of it.

*a.* Now, on this head the testimony of Scripture is full and explicit. We are justified not on the ground of any works or any worthiness of ours, but solely of grace on the ground of the atoning work of Christ (Rom. iii. 20, iv. 24, v. 9; Gal. ii. 16, 17; Titus iii. 7). To these passages many others might

be added. But it is unnecessary; the teaching of Scripture on this head is too familiar to all readers of it to require that we should elaborately support the position by quotations. Indeed, seeing it is on the ground of Christ's atoning work alone that God dispenses any blessing to the children of men, we should be led to infer that it is on this ground that sinners are justified, even were Scripture silent on the subject.

b. Assuming this, and confining our attention to the justification of the individual sinner, the question that now comes before us is, What is the *nexus* between the enjoyment of this blessing and the grounds on which it is enjoyed? In other words, on what principle is it that the doings of Christ are made valid for the securing of the blessing of justification to the sinner?

(a.) The answers which have been given to this question may be ranked as follows:—

(a.) It has been said that the sufferings of Christ were the endurance by Him of the punishment due to His people's sins, and that He, having thus endured the penalty of the law for them, has, as it were, paid their debt to the law, has actually satisfied all its claims against them, and thereby entitled them to pardon and restoration. According to this view there was an actual transfer of our sins to Christ, so that, to use the words of a writer of this school, if one has part in Christ, all his transgressions became actually the transgressions of Christ; and, on the other hand, an actual transfer of Christ's righteousness to us, so that, to follow the same writer, "as we have part in Christ, we are all that Christ was, as Christ was all that we were, as His."

(β.) A second opinion which has been entertained on this subject may be stated in the words of the Lutheran divine, Quenstedt: "The form of imputation consists in the gracious estimation (or reckoning) of God, whereby the repenting sinner is, on account of another's, *i.e.* Christ's, most perfect obedience apprehended by faith, reputed righteous before the divine tribunal, just as if it had been rendered by the man himself."<sup>1</sup> This is substantially the doctrine of Calvin on this subject. "You see," says he, "that our righteousness is not in us, but in Christ; that it becomes ours only in virtue of our being partakers

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Didact.*, iii. p. 525.

of Christ, forasmuch as we possess all His riches with Himself. It is no difficulty in the way of this that it is elsewhere taught that sin is condemned of sin in the flesh of Christ, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us (Rom. viii. 3); for there no other fulfilment is designated than we obtain by imputation. For the Lord Christ communicates with us His righteousness by, in a wonderful manner, transfusing into us its force (*vim*) in so far as respects the judgment of God. That the apostle had no other view is abundantly clear from another sentiment which he immediately after has uttered (Rom. v. 19): as by one man's disobedience we were constituted sinners; so by the obedience of one are we justified. What else is it to place our righteousness in the obedience of Christ than to assert that we are held righteous solely on the ground that Christ's obedience is accepted for us as if it were ours?"<sup>1</sup> This is the view which Dr. Wardlaw advocates; but its ablest and most earnest advocate in recent times is Fuller.

(γ.) A third view, which has been supposed not to greatly differ from the preceding, has found its principal exponent of late years in Dr. Payne. It consists in rejecting the opinion that in justification God *holds* or *regards* the sinner as righteous, or as other than he really is, and in resolving justification wholly into the *treating* of the sinner for Christ's sake as a pardoned, accepted, and reconciled child of God. Whilst this opinion may seem not to greatly differ from the preceding, the difference is not unimportant. It avoids the imputation to God of a judicial estimation not according to truth, by representing Him as simply out of the riches of His grace dealing mercy to the guilty, not estimated, reckoned, or judged other than they are. According to the one view, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the sinner in the sense of his being regarded as if that righteousness were his own; under the other view, the sinner is regarded as having no righteousness of his own, as guilty and hell-deserving; but the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him in the sense that it is made over to him in donation, and for the sake of that righteousness so gifted to him he is forgiven and saved. I do not know whether there is not a still deeper difference

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, iii. 11, 23.

between the two. Dr. Payne continues to speak of justification as a forensic act; but on his view it ceases, I cannot help thinking, to be so, at least in any strict sense. To hold a man righteous, to esteem, judge, or reckon him righteous, on whatever grounds, is the act of a judge; but to make over to him in free donation another's righteousness, and on account of that to show him mercy and grace he does not deserve, is the part, not of a judge, but of a sovereign. Though Dr. Wardlaw, then, treats the difference between his own view and this as so trifling that he says, "I must confess myself very much indisposed to discuss such a question," and concludes by declaring that "if there be a difference it is the shadow of a shade, about which the dispute would be as unsubstantial as itself," I cannot help regarding the difference as sufficient to entitle it to serious consideration. There is surely a difference worth contending for between justification regarded as a judicial declaration, that man is to be *regarded* as he is not, and justification viewed as a sovereign act *making over* to man what he has not, and then treating him as having it. In the one case God acting as a judge is represented as declaring what can hardly be said to be true in any sense; in the other case He appears as a sovereign who, admitting the legal equity of the judicial condemnation which has been pronounced against the sinner, may yet, for *other* reasons than those of law, reverse that sentence and set the guilty free.

This third view of justification is presented very clearly by Pictet in his *Théologie Chrétienne* (vol. ii. p. 109 ff.). But its greatest expositor and defender is John Owen, the first of theologians, in his invaluable treatise *On the Doctrine of Justification by Faith through the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ*.<sup>1</sup> I may with advantage extract from this work his statement of the view which he advocates on the point now before us. "To impute unto us," he says, "that which is not our own antecedently unto that imputation includes in it two things: First, a grant or donation of the thing itself unto us to be ours, on some just ground and foundation. For a thing must be made *ours* before we can justly be dealt withal according unto what is required on the

<sup>1</sup> See also his *Latin Correspondence*, p. 304.

account of it. Secondly, a will of dealing with us, or an actual dealing with us, according unto that which is so made ours. For in this matter whereof we treat the most holy and righteous God doth not justify any, that is, absolve them from sin, pronounce them righteous, and thereon grant unto them right and title unto eternal life, but upon the interveniency of a true and complete righteousness truly and completely made the righteousness of them that are to be justified, in order of nature antecedently unto their justification." Again he says, "This imputation is an act of God *ex mera gratia*, of His mere love and grace, whereby on the consideration of the mediation of Christ He makes an effectual grant and donation of a true, real, and perfect righteousness, even that of Christ Himself, unto all that do believe, and accounting it as theirs on His own gracious act, both absolves them from sin, and granteth them right and title unto eternal life."<sup>1</sup>

(δ.) Of late years a doctrine has been taught on the subject of justification which has the appearance of a regression to opinions long supposed to be exploded. According to this view, the justification of the sinner is not the imputation to him of a righteousness out of himself, but is the treating him as the actual possessor of a personal righteousness conveyed to him through his vital union with Christ. Christ is made righteousness to him in the sense of being Himself formed in the believer, bringing His own inherent righteousness into him, and thereby making him righteous. The part which faith has in this transaction is that it is that by which the vital union between Christ and the soul is formed,—that by which the man apprehends Christ, appropriates Him, becomes one with Him; and this faith is said to be imputed for righteousness because in it is the germ of all moral goodness; and as this germ has shut up in it all spiritual life, just as the acorn has shut up in it the full-grown oak, God is pleased of His grace to hold that as tantamount to all that it will ultimately produce, and to deal with man accordingly. This opinion, which appears diffusely in several of the writings of Mr. Erskine, and which has been more scientifically and accurately developed by Dr. McLeod Campbell in his work *On the Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to*

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 233 and 243, ed. 1677, 4to.



*the Remission of Sins and Eternal Life*, seems to me to be essentially a revivification of the doctrine taught by Osiander in the middle of the sixteenth century, and opposed by Melanehthon and other Lutherans as heretical, though it is in many points closely allied to that taught by Luther himself, especially in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, as both Osiander and Campbell have shown. The essential identity of view between Luther, Campbell, and Osiander may be made evident by a single citation from each. "Christian righteousness," says Luther, "consists in two things, that is to say, faith in the heart and in God's imputation. Faith is indeed a formal righteousness, and yet this righteousness is not enough; for after faith there remain yet certain remnants of sin in our flesh. . . . Wherefore the other part of righteousness must needs be added also to finish the same in us, that is to say, God's imputation. For faith giveth not enough to God, being imperfect; yea, our faith is but a little spark of faith, which beginneth only to render unto God His true divinity. We have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, but not yet the tenths. . . . Wherefore faith beginneth righteousness, but imputation maketh it perfect unto the day of Christ" (p. 252). "For as long as I live," he says again, "in the flesh, sin is truly in me. But because I am covered under the shadow of Christ's wings, as is the chicken under the wings of the hen, and dwell without fear under that most ample and large heaven of the forgiveness of sins which is spread over me, God covereth and pardoneth the remnant of sin in me; that is to say, because of that faith wherewith I began to lay hold upon Christ, He accepteth my imperfect righteousness even for perfect righteousness, and counteth my sin for no sin, which notwithstanding is sin indeed" (p. 254). Osiander, in his *Disputatio de Justificatione*, lays down, amongst others, the following propositions: "The faith by which man is justified is a spiritual motion which God creates in our hearts by the word preached and His Holy Spirit. Faith justifies us neither in that it is a quality, nor in that it is a relation, nor in that it is an excellent virtue, nor by any worth of its own, but solely in that it apprehends its proper object Christ, and unites Him to us. That righteousness which we apprehend by faith is the righteousness of God, not only

because it is accepted of God, but because it is really the righteousness of God, that is, of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be reconciled to God is to be united to Christ, to be born again of Him, to have Him in us, and to be ourselves in Him, to live through Him, to be deemed righteous through His righteousness dwelling in us. Hence we are righteous by His essential righteousness." In another of his writings he says: "When He (*i.e.* Christ) Himself dwells in us by faith, He then brings His own righteousness, which is His divine nature, with Him into us, which thence is imputed to us as if it were our own." And a recent historian of opinions on the subject of reconciliation or the atonement thus expresses that of Osiander: "Christ is righteous, inasmuch as He is Himself the essential righteousness of God. Hence man is also justified only inasmuch as he apprehends by faith Christ as the essential righteousness of God. If he have apprehended this righteousness, God Himself dwells in Him. For where Christ is, there is also His divine nature; and where the Son is in His divine nature, there also are the father and the Holy Spirit, the one eternal divine essence."<sup>1</sup> This doctrine of Osiander I do not adduce as in every respect identical with that of Luther as expressed in the extracts above given, or with that of the party in our own days to which I have referred; for Osiander had certain mystical notions respecting the work of Christ, which he has mixed up with his teaching on the subject of justification, from which the others are free; but it must, I think, be clear that in his view justification takes effect in an individual substantially in the same way, and is to him substantially the same thing, as represented in the extracts above given from Luther, and in those I am now about to give from Campbell. After speaking of the "root-conception of Christ's identifying Himself with us," he says: "In virtue of this identification, the freedom and righteousness and life which are in Christ, being His own proper endowments, and of which His coming under our sins did not despoil Him, but which proved themselves mightier than all that power of darkness,—coming forth triumphant from the conflict,—these all are ours. . . . They are all ours as Christ is ours—'He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteous-

<sup>1</sup> Baur, *Lehre von der Versöhnung*, p. 316 ff.

ness, and sanctification, and redemption.' Christ our life is presented to our faith, that believing in Him we may live—yet not we, but Christ in us. Faith does not make these high endowments ours: they are ours by the gift of God. Faith apprehends them, accepts them, gives God glory in accepting them; and this faith saves by bringing us into living harmony with the divine constitution of things in Christ; and, come into this harmony, God pronounces us righteous; and, abiding in this faith, light and life and joy in God abound in us, and the end of God in Christ is being fulfilled in us—partially now and here, to be completely so hereafter." And again he says: "Because this excellent condition of faith is in us but as a germ,—a grain of mustard-seed, a feeble dawn,—God, in imputing it as righteousness, has respect unto that of which it is the dawn—of which, as the beginning of the life of Christ in us, it is the promise, and in which it shall issue, even the noon-tide brightness of that day in which the righteous shall shine as the stars in the kingdom of their Father" (pp. 37, 39). These quotations may serve to show the substantial identity of these (supposed to be novel views) with those entertained as long ago as the time of the Reformation.

(b.) Such are the different views which have been advanced by theologians as to the imputation of Christ's righteousness for salvation to the believer. In reviewing them we shall probably agree at once to discount the first, as held only by a few hyper-Calvinists and Antinomians; as without sanction from Scripture; as opposed to the conscious experience of the godly in all ages, who have constant occasion to feel and to confess that sin still exerts a power over them, and is still in them what it is in other men, an evil and a guilty thing, even though they believe it will not be imputed to them for the sake of Christ; and as hypothecating, what is in the nature of things impossible, an actual transfer of sin and righteousness from those whose they really are to others whose they are not.

Of the other opinions above cited, that of Owen, Pictet, and Payne appears to me by much the most in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. It avoids that which is the fatal defect of the opinion which stands second in the above enumeration,

viz. of representing justification as of the nature of a legal fiction,—an act in which God regards the sinner as if he were what he is not, as if he had done what he has not done, and as if he had a claim which he has not. I confess I do not see in such modes of expression anything of the impiety which has sometimes been ascribed to them, for they are capable of a sense fully in accordance with the most reverent views of God and His ways, and so they were used by the eminent and godly men who have advocated this view. At the same time they are modes of expression which we should be shy of using without express authority from Scripture,—an authority which, in this case, I take to be wholly wanting. This view, on the other hand, avoids the Socinian doctrine that it is only the beneficial *effects* of Christ's work that we receive in justification,—a doctrine which is consistent enough on the part of those who deny to the righteousness of Christ anything of the nature of an expiation or satisfaction for sin, and resolve it wholly into His personal goodness, for the latter, of course, can be made only, as Schlichting observes, "*quatenus nostrum in bonum, justitiamque redundat*;" but which must ever be repudiated by those who regard the righteousness of Christ as propitiatory for us, for the effects of such a righteousness can be conveyed to us only as the righteousness itself is imputed to us. And, in fine, this view falls in with a principle which is repeatedly recognized in Scripture in other cases, that, namely, of conferring blessing on many who have not merited it, as a reward to one whose character and conduct were well-pleasing to God. Thus, in the covenant which God made with Noah, blessings were secured to the race at large in virtue of their descent from him; and in the covenant with Abraham his natural descendants were made partakers of the benefit for his sake. On the same principle Jehovah blessed the house of Potiphar "for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field;" the kingdom of Judah was continued to the descendants of David, though forfeited by Solomon's sin, for their father David's sake; and other instances there are of a similar kind. In all such cases the merit or moral worth abides with the parties who pleased God; but the claim or right founded on that passes over so as to include others, and entitle them to bless-

ings they themselves have not merited. When, therefore, we are taught that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us our sins and accepted us into His favour, the transaction seems to be one resting upon substantially the same principle on which we see God so extensively acting in other cases. In this case the merit and the righteousness are wholly the Lord's, but for His sake there is transferred to those that are His a claim and title to salvation, in virtue of which God treats them as dear children. "To as many as received Him gave He power (*ἐξουσίαν* = authorization or title<sup>1</sup>) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John i. 12). We may borrow an illustration of this from our Lord's parable of the marriage feast. None were entitled to sit down at that feast but those who had the marriage garment. This, however, none of those who came had. How then could any be privileged to enter and partake of the feast? Did the king propose to regard them as *if* they had a marriage garment though they had none, and so admit them to the feast? Not so; but out of his bounty he provided garments which he gave in free donation to those who would accept them, and thereby conferred on them a right and title to enter as privileged guests. Even so a title to become sons of God by being justified is given to believers by the righteousness of Christ being communicated to them, and they having this righteousness—not being regarded as if they had it, but actually having it—are, for Christ's sake, dealt with as righteous.

With regard to the last of the opinions above cited, I feel constrained to observe that whilst it gives prominence to certain aspects of truth that have probably been too little regarded in the prevailing schemes of doctrine, it is wholly inadequate as a statement of the doctrine of Scripture on the subject of justification. I think it of importance that our attention should be called to the fact that it is nowhere taught in Scripture that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; but that the doctrine of Scripture is that faith is imputed or counted to us for righteousness, *i.e.* that faith in Christ puts us in the same position with regard to privilege as perfect righteousness would; and especially I count it of

<sup>1</sup> "Nicht *Würde* oder *Vorzug*, sondern *Berechtigung*; er ermächtigte sie." Meyer, *Commentary*, v. 27, xvii. 2.

importance that we should be brought to regard faith, not simply as an intellectual condition of salvation, but as that by which a real union is effected between the soul and Christ, so as actually, and that not arbitrarily, but in virtue of the mediatorial constitution, to bring us under the blessings Christ has secured. Nor would I overlook what we owe to the upholders of this opinion for their so vividly impressing on us the inherent religiousness of faith itself as the germ of the new life, the reverting, so to speak, of the soul to that condition of implicit trust in God, the loss of which was the beginning of sin in the world, and the want of which is at the bottom of all apostasy and rebellion against God. But whilst I freely and thankfully acknowledge obligation in these respects to the advocates of this opinion, I must reject the opinion itself as a statement of the N. T. doctrine of justification. It seems to me exposed to objections of the most decisive kind.

a. Whilst professing to abjure utterly the adhibition of a legal fiction in the dealing of God with man in the matter of salvation, this opinion is necessitated to resort to that very hypothesis in order to escape from teaching that man is justified by works. For if man be justified *propter fidem* and not simply *per fidem*, then his faith must be one of two things: either it must be so good and meritorious as to entitle him of itself to acceptance with God, or God must by a legal fiction regard it as if it were so. I can see nothing beyond this alternative. Now, the former side of this alternative no evangelical divine will adopt; even the Socinian will recoil from it as one which neither Scripture nor reason will sanction. What remains, then, but just the abhorred and repudiated hypothesis of a legal fiction? and that, let me add, under a far less innocent form than it appears in the doctrine of imputation as taught by Calvin, Fuller, and Wardlaw; for surely if it be wrong to teach that God imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own, it must be worse to teach that He treats the germ of goodness in us as if it were the perfection of it, and gives to a man who, from being wicked and sinful, has taken only the first step to goodness the right which belongs only to those who are perfect in goodness, and have never been anything but good.

β. I cannot see what provision is made on this hypothesis for the pardon of past guilt on the part of the sinner who accepts the gospel. According to this doctrine, faith is, because of its germinal goodness, held as if it were equivalent to all goodness, to complete moral righteousness. But plainly this can operate only *prospectively*,—faith can be counted only for such righteousness as it contains the germ of, and no more. What, then, cancels the guilt of, it may be, a long life of sin preceeding the belief of the gospel? To this the advocates of this opinion have no answer but in the hypothesis of a universal pardon of all guilt, secured to men through the death of Christ, irrespective of faith or any moral goodness in them. Into this I cannot enter here further than to say that it is an hypothesis (α) destitute of all express authority from Scripture; (β) opposed to the clear testimony of Scripture, which not only teaches that guilt is still a possible, nay, an actual thing in this world, but that it is not passively under a general unconditional amnesty, but by active personal faith in Christ that men are justified; (γ) incompatible with the clear testimony of conscience, which, giving response to the moral law of the universe, convicts every man of guilt, and could receive no message as a gospel or as true that did not acknowledge and proceed upon that fact; (δ) and, finally, an extension of Antinomianism, by making that the common privilege of all men which Antinomians plead for as the privilege of the elect, viz. that with them sin is really no sin, all sin having been already condoned and cancelled in Christ. Regarding in this light the doctrine of universal pardon, I cannot but reject an opinion which falls back on this doctrine as essential to its support.

γ. I find it impossible to reconcile this opinion with the statement of the apostle, that God hath made Christ to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God. Between the two clauses of this verse there is an unmistakable antithesis, and to this due justice must be done if we would interpret it fairly. In whatever sense, then, we understand the sinner to be made righteousness through Christ, in that sense must we understand Christ to have been made sin for us. Assume, then, that we are made the righteousness of God in the sense that the germinal principle of righteousness

in us is treated as if it were the whole and fully developed product, and it will follow that Christ was made sin for us in the sense that the germ of sin in Him was held as if it had effloresced into all the fulness of perfect iniquity. We must therefore regard the apostle as here teaching, not merely the peccability of Christ, but His actual depravity—a doctrine not only opposed to the express declaration of Scripture, but from which the Christian consciousness, the Christian instinct, revolts. But how this consequence is to be avoided and the passage to be fairly interpreted I do not see, unless we adopt the common view, that as Christ had our sins put on Him and therefore suffered for us, believers have His righteousness put on them, and therefore are pardoned and accepted for His sake.

δ. The apostle repeatedly affirms that we are justified by faith and by the blood of Christ. These statements are usually understood to mean that the *ground* of our absolution and acceptance with God is the atoning death of Christ, and the *medium* of our absolution and acceptance is our faith in Him, whereby we become one with Him. But what do these phrases mean on the hypothesis now under consideration? I am at a loss to attach to them any meaning except it be that the blood of Christ is *one* ground of our being made righteous, and faith is *another* ground of the same. But such an interpretation of the words we cannot admit. For, in the first place, the sentiment elicited is altogether strange to Scripture—nowhere are we taught that Christ's death and our faith are conjoint grounds of salvation; secondly, the sentiment is in itself absurd; because the object of faith being the blood of Christ, it is impossible that the faith and the blood can both be grounds of salvation, unless it could be maintained that an anchor which lays hold on the earth is a stay for the ship in the same sense in which the ground itself is; thirdly, this interpretation puts a sense on the Greek verb *δικαίωω* which it nowhere bears; it never means to make righteous, but always to pronounce righteous, to absolve, to clear.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Erskine, indeed, says that there is "but one verb answering to these two nouns [*δικαίωσις* and *δικαιοσύνη*], viz. *δικαίνουμαι*, which verb may either signify, 'I am the subject of *δικαίωσις*,' i.e. 'I am freed from the imputation of



## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(3.) *The Medium of Justification: Faith.*

Having considered the nature and the ground of justification, we come now to consider the *medium* of it—that by means of which an individual becomes a partaker of this blessing.

On this head the testimony of Scripture is full and decisive (Rom. v. 1; Gal. iii. 8; Rom. iii. 28, iv. 11, ix. 30, x. 6; Phil. iii. 9; Rom. iii. 22, iv. 5, 9). It is by faith, then, that men obtain righteousness, or are justified. And as this is not the *efficient cause* of justification, for “it is God that justifieth;” nor the *meritorious ground* of justification, for this is found alone in the propitiatory work of Christ, “through whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand,”—it must be regarded as the *medium* through which we obtain the blessing. With this accords the phraseology invariably used in the N. T., where the relation of faith to justification is expressed by the particles *ἐκ* or *διὰ*, particles of mediation.<sup>1</sup> Faith is sometimes spoken of as the *instrumental cause* of justification. But this phraseology is objectionable, because, as an object can become an instrumental cause only by being used by the efficient cause to accomplish the result, to say that faith is the instrumental cause of a man’s justification would

sin,’ or ‘I am the subject of *δικαιοσύνη*,’ i.e. ‘I am made righteous’” (*Brasen Serpent*, p. 143). For this piece of lexicography Mr. Erskine gives no authority whatever; and in such a case his *ipse dixit* cannot be allowed to settle the matter, especially as he is obviously ignorant of the fact that the Greek language possesses the word *δικαιοποιῶ* in the sense of “I make righteous.” I have examined some scores of passages in which *δικαίω* occurs, and I affirm that it never is used otherwise than in a judicial sense, nor do the lexicons give it any other meaning. Mr. Erskine denies that faith is ever connected with *δικαίω* when used in relation to the pardon of sin. Had he forgotten Acts xiii. 39, where we read: “Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and from all (*ἀπὸ πάντων*, i.e. *ἀμαρτιῶν*) from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses, by this man every one that believeth is justified”?

<sup>1</sup> See Winer’s *Grammar*, by Moulton, pp. 460, 472.

mean either that God employs faith as the instrument by which He effects justification, or that man by employing faith to effect justification is in some sense the efficient cause of his own righteousness; neither of which is true, inasmuch as faith is not God's instrument which He brings to bear on man for his justification, but something He requires man to have for himself, and inasmuch as man is not and cannot be in any sense his own justifier. Another phrase sometimes employed is that faith is *the condition* of justification. Now to this, rightly understood, there is no objection; but as the phrase is ambiguous, it is as well to avoid it. A condition may mean a valuable consideration or a meritorious act on the ground of which some bargain rests or some advantage is conferred; as when one man conveys a piece of property to another on condition of receiving a certain sum of money in return, or as when a reward is offered on condition of a certain act being performed. In this sense of the word it is obviously wrong to speak of faith as the condition of salvation or justification, for this would be to put the man's faith in the place of Christ's work. It is not, however, in this sense that the term is used in this connection. "Condition" often means that without which or in the absence of which a certain result will not take place; as when we say the opening of the eye is the condition of seeing, or the pellucidity of the atmosphere a condition of the sun's light reaching the earth. In this case we state a "*conditio sine qua non*," that in the absence of which the alleged result will not take place. And in this sense faith is unquestionably a condition of justification; it is that without which justification will not be effected. But as there is a danger of the term "condition" being understood in the former and not in the latter sense, and so of faith being looked upon as something which the sinner has to render by way of equivalent or meritorious work for justification, it is better to avoid this ambiguous terminology altogether.

a. Regarding faith, then, as the medium of justification, we have first to inquire what this faith through which men are justified is.

The Greek word rendered by faith in our version is *πίστις*.

This stands associated with the adjective *πιστός* and the verb *πιστεύω*, and in order to arrive at a just idea of its meaning we must attend to the usage of these cognate words in the N. T. as well as to the usage of *πίστις* itself.

In the classical writers the primary concept attached to these words is that of *trust*. Thus we have such a phrase as *ὃ πιστῶν ἰσχων τήνδ' ἐχειρούμην ἄγραν* (Soph., *Oed. Col.*, 950), "on which placing trust I seized this prey;" *ἑταῖρος πιστός*, "a trusty companion;" *ταῖς σπονδαῖς πιστεύειν*, "to trust to treaties." From this arose the secondary meaning of *persuasion, conviction, belief*, or the holding as true and trustworthy any assertion or object of thought. Thus Plato speaks of the maker of a vessel having a right conviction or opinion (*πίστιν ὀρθήν*) concerning the vessel he has made (*Repub.* x. 601, E); and of a hunter having confidence (*πιστόν*) in nets and snares (*De Leg.* vii. 824, B); and the phrase *πιστεύειν τὶ τινί* was used by the Greeks to denote the putting faith in any one in regard to anything. From this the transition to believing what one says, or any statement that is made, is easy.

It is sometimes said that it is in this last-mentioned sense that these words are generally used in the N. T. This, however, is not the case. On the contrary, I doubt if a single instance can be adduced in which the substantive *πίστις* signifies the act of simple belief or holding for true any statement. The adjective *ἄπιστος* is sometimes used actively, and as so used it sometimes has the sense of believing a fact or assertion; as when our Lord says to Thomas, "Be not faithless (*ἄπιστος*) but believing (*πιστός*)," where it plainly refers to the accepting as true and real the fact of our Lord's being then present in the body. The verb *πιστεύειν* more frequently is used in this sense; as when our Lord, after saying to Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," asks, "Believest thou this?" (*πιστεύεις τοῦτο*); and Martha replies, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ" (*ἐγὼ πεπίστευκα ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χρ.*); where we have both an instance of the verb followed by the accusative, and an instance of it followed by *ὅτι* (John xi. 27). The construction with *ὅτι* is frequent in the writings of St. John.

*Πίστις* is often used in a vague and general way to denote

the acceptance and profession of the gospel or Christianity, without there being anything to indicate *how* it has been received; as when such expressions as the following are used: to "abide in the faith," to "turn from the faith," to "continue in the faith," "established in the faith," etc. And, in accordance with this, Christians are called οἱ πιστοί, "the faithful, or believers," and the verb πιστεύω is used absolutely to express the action of those who embrace the truth, as in John i. 7, iv. 41, etc. Πίστις is also sometimes used to designate the truth itself which is received, as when Paul speaks of preaching the faith which he once destroyed, or when he calls on Christians to hold fast the profession of the faith.

In none of these usages of the terms is faith connected with justification. But besides these there is a usage of the terms in which the primary idea of trust or confidence is prominent, and specially trust or confidence in that which does not present itself to the senses or is discerned by the natural intelligence. This is the idea which pervades the O. T. references to faith. The Hebrew word נֶאֱמָר, which the LXX. render by πίστις, is from נָס, "to make firm" or "to be firm," and in the Hiphil "to hold firmly," "to confide in," "to trust;" and signifies primarily *firmness*, and from that, as used of God, *faithfulness*, or firm adherence to His word; and, as used of man, *confident trust*, or firm reliance on God and His word. This idea the N. T. writers have very prominently reproduced in their usage of πίστις and πιστεύω. Instead of the construction of πίστις with the genitive of object, or of πιστεύω with an accusative or with ὅτι, they use such constructions as πίστις ἐπὶ, π. πρὸς, π. εἰς, π. ἐν, and πιστεύω ἐπὶ, π. εἰς, and sometimes πιστεύω followed by the dative. These formulæ are used when the object of the πίστις is some object not cognizable by the senses or the natural reason, specially some object made known to us by divine revelation. They are principally used in reference to God or to Christ as objects of man's trust and confidence. Thus πιστεύειν εἰς τὸν Θεόν does not mean to believe that God is, nor does it mean to believe what God says; it means to rely on God, to put trust and confidence in Him, though unseen by us, though not cognizable by us. It is with this meaning of the word in view that the apostle says of faith,

that it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; it is that by which we, exercising confident trust in God, obtain a present and substantial realization of that which is not present to the senses, and for which we have no security but in God's word. So, also, the apostle describes the Christian life as a walking by faith, not by sight; we walk securely, not because we see our way, but because we confidently rely on Him who is our Guide and Helper.

It thus appears that, discounting those cases in which *πίστις* or *πιστεύω* or *πιστός* is used vaguely of the mere acceptance or profession of Christianity, and those in which *πίστις* is used of Christianity itself as a system of truth believed, as not tending to throw any light on our present object of inquiry, *πίστις*, originally and primarily signifying simple trust, may come to signify the trust we have in any statement as true, the opinion we form of it as true, the holding of it as true; and also the trust we repose in any object as being what it professes to be, or as sufficient for what it offers to perform, and so our confidence in or reliance on that object. It is in this last sense the term is invariably used when the object is a person and the noun is followed by the prepositions *εἰς*, *πρός*, *ἐπί*, or *ἐν*. The same is true of the verb *πιστεύειν*. That, when followed by an accusative, usually signifies to believe or hold for true the object expressed by the following accusative; so, also, when it is followed by *ὅτι* it signifies the recognition or acknowledgment as true of that which the *ὅτι* introduces. When, however, it is followed by any of the above-named prepositions and in relation to a person, it expresses confidence or reliance on the person named. In the sense of simple belief the noun seldom if ever appears in the N. T.; but in this sense the verb occurs frequently, especially in the writings of St. John. The verb also occurs in construction with the dative, and in this case it expresses the act of believing or acknowledging the veracity of the object denoted by the dative, as, e.g., *πιστεύετε μοι*, "believe me" (John xiv. 11); *τῇ γραφῇ ἐπίστευσαν*, "they believed the Scripture" (John ii. 22). We have thus three different constructions of the verb, each conveying a different sense. We have—

(a) *πιστεύειν τί*, "to believe something," i.e. to hold it for true, or *π. ὅτι κ.τ.λ.*, "to believe that," etc.

(b) πιστεύειν τινί, "to believe any one," *i.e.* to regard his testimony as true.

(c) πιστεύειν εἰς, πρὸς, or ἐπὶ τινά, "to believe on or upon any one," *i.e.* to place confidence or reliance on any one, which is also, though rarely, expressed by ἐν with the dative.

We thus arrive at the conclusion that the meaning of πίστις and its cognates in any given instance must be determined by the object with which they are connected, and the way in which they are construed with the word or words describing that object. If that object be a statement or testimony, then πίστις is the credit we give to it, the regarding it as true; πιστεύειν is the act of crediting it; and πιστός is the person so crediting it. If the object be a witness, whether personal or documentary, then πιστεύειν, construed with the dative, expresses the act of giving credit to that witness. If the object be a person, or a promise, or an assurance, and is indicated by the prepositions εἰς, πρὸς, ἐπὶ with the accusative, or ἐν with the dative, then πίστις signifies the reliance we place on that object, and πιστεύειν signifies the act of placing that reliance.

I am the more anxious to place this clearly before you because it is often asserted that there is no real difference between believing a testimony concerning any one and believing in the person concerning whom the testimony is given. To one accustomed to mark the precision with which shades of meaning are expressed in Greek, such an assertion, amounting to a declaration that πιστεύειν τὶ περὶ τινός is equivalent in meaning to πιστεύειν εἰς τινά, cannot but appear very startling; nor will even the mere English scholar easily reconcile himself to the opinion that to believe anything of any one is tantamount to believing in that one. I confess I am surprised to find such a writer as Dr. Wardlaw giving in to this opinion, and asserting that "believing on the Son of God" is the same as believing the record that God hath given concerning Him.<sup>1</sup> Had the assertion been, that whosoever really believes the record will be led thereby to believe on the Son, it then might have been admitted; for in that case the believing on the Son would have been presented as something different from believing the record,

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Assurance and Pardon*, p. 28.

though consequent upon it. But to assert that the two positions are identical in meaning seems to me to set at defiance the most obvious conditions of speech. Surely to affirm that what a record declares concerning some one is true is not the same thing as putting faith in that one of whom the record speaks. That may follow as a result of the former conviction, but it is a result of it, and not the conviction itself. The one is an acknowledgment of the veracity of the author of the record ; the other is an affection excited in the mind towards the person of whom the record speaks. In respect of Christ, of whom the divine record speaks, we first of all receive as true what God in the record tells us of Him ; we next recognize in Him as thus presented to us one who is suited to be our Helper and Saviour ; and, finally, we confide in Him as our Saviour. It is only when we reach this last stage that we can with any propriety of speech be said to believe on Him.

Dr. Wardlaw adduces as decisive in favour of his doctrine John xx. 30, 31 : " And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book ; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." On this Dr. Wardlaw remarks : " The ' signs ' spoken of are evidences of the truth that ' Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; ' these signs are wrought for the express purpose that on the ground of the evidence afforded by them this truth might be believed : and with the believing of it eternal life is connected ; the life being obtained in believing." Now all this is true, but it does not touch the point in question, unless Dr. Wardlaw means to say that eternal life is obtained through a man's simply believing on the ground of external evidence such as is furnished by miraculous deeds or signs that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God. This, I think, he would not have maintained. But if this be not maintained, then the passage decides nothing as to the point before us ; for it simply affirms that before a man can obtain eternal life through Christ he must believe that He is the Christ, etc., which is what all must admit. It does not say that this is *all* a man has to do in order to obtain eternal life ; and therefore it leaves us free to affirm that this eternal life is

obtained by any one only when, acknowledging Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, the man also confides in Him and trusts to Him as his Saviour.

Dr. Wardlaw also adduces in support of his view 1 John v. 10, where we have the phrase *πεπίστευκεν εἰς* used in reference to *μαρτυρίαν*, and where, he argues, it means nothing more than simply to believe, to accept as true God's testimony concerning His Son; from which he would have us to infer that *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν* means nothing more than to believe what is said concerning Christ in the gospel. But, on the supposition that the two usages are quite parallel, surely if *πιστεύειν εἰς μαρτυρίαν* is properly translated "to believe the testimony," then *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν* must be translated "to believe Christ;" it cannot possibly mean to believe the testimony concerning Christ. To believe Christ, however, would mean simply to credit what He says; and this, I presume, no one will accept as the meaning of the phrase *πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν*. Instead, therefore, of determining the meaning of this phrase by the rendering which the A. V. gives of *πιστεύειν εἰς μαρτυρίαν*, we must correct this rendering by bringing it into accordance with that usually and properly given to the former; we must render it "to believe on the testimony," or, as Dr. Wardlaw himself admits, it may be rendered "putting confidence in the testimony." The parallelism of the two phrases is thus preserved; and the only difference in meaning between them is such as necessarily arises from the difference between putting trust or confidence in a person and putting trust or confidence in a statement.

At the risk of repeating what has already been said, I would sum up the result of our inquiry thus in the words of an eminent German theologian, Luthardt: "Faith has to do with God, in the N. T. with God through Christ as the absolute revelation of God (John xiv. 9). God (and Christ) is (1) The *ground* of faith, because it is on His authority that we believe; *τῷ Θεῷ*, Acts xxvii. 25; Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6; equivalent to 'the word of God;' we do not, however, find *τῷ Χριστῷ*, but rather the word of Christ, or on the ground of His word. To this faith Jesus sought to bring those to whom as yet His miracles were the only ground of faith (John ii. 23, iii. 2, iv. 48 ff.). (2) The



content of belief; the having believed, viz. that God is (Jas. ii. 19), that Jesus the Christ is (John viii. 24, *ὅτι ἐγὼ εἶμι*, 1 John v. 1). (3) The *aim* or *scope* of belief, the object on which man believes, to which believing he yields himself, which in faith he assumes with himself and thereon bases his life, *εἰς, ἐπὶ, ἐν*." <sup>1</sup> The effect of these different prepositions when used to indicate this object is thus set forth by the same author: "With *εἰς* and *ἐπὶ*, and sometimes also with *πρὸς* followed by the accusative *Χριστὸν*, there is conveyed the idea that Christ is the object or aim of faith, and faith is a yielding up unto Him; with *ἐν* followed by the dative *Χριστῷ* there is expressed the idea that faith is based on Christ and rests on Him." To this I may add a sentence from the father of the scholastic theology, the "master of sentences," Peter the Lombard: "Aliud est credere in Deum, aliud credere Deum. Credere Deo est credere vera esse quæ loquitur, quod et mali faciunt, et nos credimus homine, non in hominem. Credere Deum est credere quod ipse sit Deus, quod etiam mali faciunt. Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo in eum ire, credendo ei adherere et ejus membris incorporari. Per hanc fidem," he adds, "justificatur impius." <sup>2</sup>

b. Having considered the nature of faith, let us now go on to consider the *object* of saving faith.

This is distinctly set before us in the N. T. as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is presented to us as set forth by God, and as acting for the redemption and salvation of lost sinners. It is not something about Jesus Christ, not the testimony concerning Him which is the object of saving faith, but Jesus Christ Himself, in His mediatorial character and office and work as made known to us in the Bible. The testimony therein contained concerning Him must, of course, be credited, for until this is done Christ is nothing to us but a name; but the mere crediting of this is not saving faith, because the object of that faith is not the testimony or record, but the divine-human Saviour Himself to whom it relates.

That this is the doctrine of the N. T. may be clearly shown. When Peter first opened his commission among

<sup>1</sup> *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Sent.*, iii. dist. 23 d.

the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius he made this declaration: "To Him [Jesus Christ] give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him (εἰς αὐτόν, 'upon Him') shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). When the jailor at Philippi cried out to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" their answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰ. Χ.), and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). In all these cases the formula πιστεύειν εἰς or ἐπὶ is used, which, as we have already seen, intimates the placing of trust, or confidence in, or reliance upon, the object of the πίστις. In accordance with this, those of whom justifying faith is predicated are described as those who have believed on Christ, or, which is the same thing, on the name of Christ. Thus Paul declared, in his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, that from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, every one believing in Him (ἐν τούτῳ, "in this one whom I preach") is justified (Acts xiii. 39). See also John i. 12, iii. 16, 36, vi. 29, vii. 38; Acts xxvi. 18. More specially it is Christ as set forth to be a propitiation, and to act as Mediator between God and man, who is the proper object of saving faith. See Rom. iii. 25; 1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 19, 21.

Thus Scripture makes it clear that the proper object of saving faith is our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God gave up for us all, that by His obedience unto death He might lay a basis for our acceptance with God, and might acquire merit for the sake of which legal righteousness is given to sinners, and they are dealt with as righteous. And as faith is faith on Him or in Him, it is not a mere belief of the truth concerning Him, but a personal assiance of the mind on Him as He is made known to us in the gospel.

The conclusion at which we have thus arrived admits of being confirmed by several additional considerations.

(a) There are certain expressions used which are equivalents for faith, and which are of such a kind as to prove that something more than mere belief is required. Whilst on the side of the *intellect* such expressions as θεωρεῖν and γινώσκειν are used in connection with believing (John vi. 40, 69, x. 38, etc.), a connection which has its root in the fact that there

can be no faith without knowledge and perception of its object; on the side of the *will* we have such expressions as λαμβάνειν, "to receive;" ἀκολουθεῖν, "to follow;" ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς, "to come to," etc. Such expressions involve on the part of those of whom they are used the exercise not only of thought, but of desire, choice, and resolution. We have also such expressions as "the obedience of faith," *i.e.* faith as an act of obedience (ὑπακοή πίστεως, Rom. i. 5); καρδίᾳ πιστεύεται, "believes with the heart" (Rom. x. 9); and as the opposite of faith we have ἀπειθεῖν, which conveys the idea of disobedience (1 Pet. ii. 7). All these expressions indicate the exercise of will and choice on the part of men in the matter of salvation; and unless we hold that there are different ways of obtaining salvation, we must regard these as equivalent to faith, and so conclude that faith is not a mere intellectual reception of truth, but an act implying desire, choice, acquiescence, trust.

(b) Belief is simply a kind of knowledge. The belief of anything is simply the knowing of it as real and true. If, therefore, the mere belief of certain facts and truths were all that is required for salvation, every one who knows these to be facts and truths would be thereby saved. But will this be maintained by any one? Surely it is not the knowledge we have of truth, but the *use* we make of that knowledge, which is of avail to us. If it be said, "But where there is the knowledge there will also be the use," it may be replied, this does not necessarily follow; for we meet continually with instances of men knowing certain things to be true and yet not using their knowledge for any practical end; and besides, this very assertion involves the admission that the mere belief is not enough, and that it is the following up of that belief with the use of it which makes it effectual for salvation. What is this but to admit that simple belief is not all that is required for salvation?

(c) In the O. T. we find that the quality specially required in those who would be held righteous is trust in God. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee;" "Trust in the Lord and do good;" "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord," etc. Now, if under the ancient economy that by which a man obtained acceptance with God

was trust in Him, does not this raise a strong presumption that that which in the N. T. occupies the same place, namely faith, should also be essential to trust in Him?

(d) We find that our Lord in performing miracles laid great stress on the faith of the party for whom or on whom the miracle was wrought. Now, what was the faith thus required by Him? Was it the mere belief of certain facts or truths concerning Christ? No doubt some knowledge of His character and claims, some acquaintance with His power, and belief that He was what He assumed to be, the Messiah, was involved in this faith, because there can be no faith in one of whom we know nothing, or nothing fitted to awaken confidence in Him. But surely this was not all that our Lord required when He demanded faith in those who implored His help, or all that He commended when He said to any one, "Great is thy faith; be it unto thee according to thy word." In many of the instances recorded the knowledge of the party was very limited, and in some it was manifestly not only defective but erroneous. But such as it was, it led those who had it to apply to Christ for the help they required. Knowing, for instance, that He was able to heal the sick, they brought their sick to Him for healing. What, then, was the faith which He required of them ere He granted their request? Was it not that they should place implicit trust in Him, that they should confide in Him as alone able to do for them that which they asked? But if that faith which was required for the saving and healing of the body was something more than mere knowledge, was trust in Christ as the Almighty Healer, what reason have we to suppose that that faith which avails to the saving of the soul is less than this?

(e) Abraham is presented in Scripture as a remarkable example of true faith. Moses tells us that "he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness," and both Paul and James cite this thus: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Now what was this faith of Abraham? Was it merely the knowledge of certain promises God had given him, and the belief that because God had given them they would be fulfilled? Was there not also trust in God that He would fulfil them? and did not this trust enter into the very essence of his belief

that they would be fulfilled? Now the apostle adduces the faith of Abraham as of the same kind with that faith of the Christian by which we are justified. It is on this ground that Abraham is represented in the N. T. as the father of all them that believe (Rom. iv. 11). "Abraham," says the apostle, "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. iii. 6, 7). That it is the faith which justifies which the apostle thus identifies with the faith of Abraham, is evident from the whole tenor of his discourse both in Romans and Galatians. If, then, the faith which justifies the sinner be the same in kind as the faith of Abraham, as his faith was trust in God the faith of the Christian must also be of the nature of trust.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that saving faith is trust—trust in Christ as the Saviour who hath made atonement for sin, and now lives and reigns to give repentance and remission of sins to men. The proper object of faith is the Lord Himself; not certain facts concerning Him, not His life, nor His death, nor His resurrection, not any doctrine or proposition regarding Him; but Christ Himself, the Son of God, the Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church, the Healer and the Helper of men, the Light and the Life of the world. They that trust in Him as Abraham trusted in God are thereby justified, and are blessed with faithful Abraham.

c. But what is implied in trust in Christ? There is implied in this—

(a) The having right thoughts concerning Him and His work, the knowing of the truth concerning Him, and the holding of that for true.

(b) The realizing His Person, His Agency, and His sufficiency for us as a Saviour.

(c) An earnest desire on our part of the blessing of salvation; for men never trust any one for what they do not desire to obtain.

(d) The yielding of ourselves to Christ, and our resting on Him as able and willing to do for us all that we desire and need; thus choosing Him to be our Saviour, and reposing with implicit confidence in Him for salvation.

The faith which we thus place in Christ brings us into close personal union with Him. We are thus made one with Him, and, as the apostle expresses it, are called to the fellowship of the Son of God, and made partakers of Christ (1 Cor. i. 9; Heb. iii. 14). United to Christ, the believer has fellowship in His sufferings, in His death, in His resurrection, in His ascension, and in His reign. He is crucified with Christ; he is risen with Christ to walk with Him in newness of life; he sits with Christ in heavenly places, and anticipates the time when he shall see Him as He is, and be for ever personally with Him. The believer is accepted in Christ's acceptance, justified in His justification, and made to participate in His blessedness in part now, wholly in the world to come.

(4.) *Summary of Opinion on the Doctrine of Justification.*

A brief summary of the views advanced on the subject of justification unto life may here be given in concluding the subject.

a. A summary of the views of the Lutheran divines is thus given by Heinrich Schmid: "Reconciliation with God having been effected through Christ, in that He in the place of men hath fulfilled the law and made satisfaction for the sins of the world, the new salvation is preached to men thenceforward, and therein is offered to men the forgiveness of their sins (Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38, v. 31, x. 43, xiii. 38, xxvi. 18). To become partakers of this there is not required on man's part a work by which he may previously merit it, for Christ has alone done all that is needed for the obtaining of salvation, but the only thing required is that man accept the offered salvation, that he appropriate the promised blessing, and this he does by faith. This faith, however, can be attained by the man only when he, having been informed of the salvation obtained through Christ and offered to him, recognizes the actual existence of this salvation and the truth of the promise as well as the consolation that lies in it, and arrives at the assurance that this salvation is designed, not somehow for this one or that one, but also for him; for a joyful message can benefit a man only when no doubt

is entertained by him as to its truth, and when also he is convinced that he himself is intended in it. Faith accordingly consists of these constituent elements:—

“(a) Of *knowledge*, and that *explicit*, of the things to be believed (*credenda*), principally concerning Christ and His merit, and the grace of God, or remission of sins and salvation from God, to be obtained thereby.

“(b) Of *assent*, *i.e.* an approving judgment of the intellect by which we believe those things which Scripture delivers concerning Christ and His merit and satisfaction for our sins, and concerning the grace of God and His promises of the gratuitous remission of sins for the sake of Christ, to be certainly and indubitably true, and simply acquiesce in them.

“(c) Of *trust* (*fiducia*), an act of the will by which it acquiesces in Christ the Mediator as a good now, and ours, and the cause of another good, viz. the remission of sins and life eternal to follow.”<sup>1</sup>

The views of Calvin and his followers may be gathered from the following utterances taken from their writings and symbolical books:—

“A just definition of faith will be supplied to us if we say that it is a firm and certain knowledge of the divine benevolence toward us which, founded in the truth of a gracious promise in Christ, is by the Holy Spirit both revealed to and sealed upon our minds and hearts.”<sup>2</sup>

“In sum, he alone is a believer who, persuaded by a solid persuasion that God is to him a propitious and benevolent Father, promises to himself all things from His benignity; he alone who, trusting in the promises of the divine benevolence towards him, takes it upon him to have an undoubted expectation of salvation. . . . The believer, I say, is he alone who, resting on the security of his own salvation, confidently exults over the devil and death, as we are taught by that splendid burst of the apostle, ‘For I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able

<sup>1</sup> *Dogmatik der Evangelisch-Lutheren Kirche, dargestellt und aus den quellen belegt.*

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, iii. 2. 7.

to separate us from the love of God, which embraceth us in Christ Jesus' (Rom. viii. 38)." <sup>1</sup>

"Saving faith is an assured trust kindled in my heart by the Holy Ghost through the gospel, whereby I repose myself upon God, being assuredly persuaded that remission of sins, everlasting righteousness, and life are given, not to others only, but to me also, and that freely through the merey of God for the merit of Christ alone." <sup>2</sup>

The later Geneva school of Calvinists, as represented by Turretine and Pietet, in order to meet an objection urged against the doctrine as taught by Calvin, adopted a modified view in an important particular different from his. The objection urged against his doctrine was that it ran in a vicious circle, for it represented justifying faith, by which we obtain the remission of sins, as consisting in our believing that our sins are remitted to us, thus making our receiving a blessing dependent on our believing that we already have it. To meet this Turretine distinguishes between remission as obtained *de jure* by the death of Christ, and remission as obtained *de facto* by the efficacious application thereof; in the former of which senses he maintains that the remission of sins already procured by the death of Christ is the object of faith, while in the latter sense the remission is something to be obtained; for, as faith is the instrumental cause of justification, it must precede justification. He further observes that "the fiducial act is twofold, on the one hand preceding justification as its cause, on the other following it as its effect. The former, consisting in a persuasion of the perfect satisfaction of Christ for the sins of all believers, and in fleeing to Him and receiving Him, respects the remission of sins as already meritoriously obtained by Christ, but as yet in fact to be applied to me believing. The latter, consisting in the reflex act of faith and in the sense of justification, respects remission as already applied to me believing. By the former I believe that my sins will be remitted in the future, or here and now. By the latter I believe that my sins have been remitted in the past. Hence to obtain remission of sins I have not to believe that my sins have been already remitted to me, as is falsely charged upon us, but I have to believe that to

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, § 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism*, qu. 21.



me believing and repenting my sins will certainly be remitted, according to the promise made to those who believe and repent."

This, it will be seen, fairly meets the objection; but it does so by a change of position from that against which the objection is directed. Calvin's position is that saving faith is a confident persuasion that my sins are remitted for the sake of Christ. Against this position the objection is perfectly valid, for to believe that my sins are remitted is really to believe that I am justified; and if it is by this faith that I am justified, it follows that I am justified by believing that I am justified, which is not only moving in a circle, but, as Dr. Wardlaw acutely observes, represents a sinner as justified by his believing what must, of course, at the time of his believing be false.<sup>1</sup> Turretine escapes from this conclusion and dilemma by distinguishing between the faith which has Christ for its object and the faith which has respect to our own condition as pardoned, the former of which alone he holds to be justifying faith. In this he may be perfectly right; but obviously in taking this ground he has deserted the position against which the objection was directed.

The position taken by Turretine is that which Arminius advocates. "Justifying faith," he says, "is not that by which any one believes that his sins are remitted to him for the sake of Christ, for this follows justification itself, or remission of sins, which is the effect of justifying faith. . . . Justifying faith is that by which men believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all who believe, and of each of them in particular, even the Saviour of him who, through Christ, believes in God, who justifies the ungodly."<sup>2</sup>

Not essentially different from this is the view of Owen. "The nature of justifying faith," he says, "with respect unto that exercise of it whereby we are justified, consisteth in the heart's approbation of the way of justification and salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ proposed in the gospel as proceeding from the grace, wisdom, and love of God, with its acquiescency therein as unto its own concernment and condition. . . . That this [the pardon of our own sins in particular, the especial mercy of God unto our souls] is the object of justifying faith, and

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on the Assurance of Faith*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, by Nichol, ii. p. 723; see also p. 400.

that a man is bound to believe this in order of nature antecedent unto his justification, I do deny; nor yet do I know of any testimony or safe experience whereby it may be confirmed.”<sup>1</sup>

“Faith is not an especial assurance of a man’s own justification and salvation by Christ; *that* it will produce, but not until another step or two in its progress be over; but faith is a satisfactory persuasion that the way of God proposed in the gospel is fitted, suited, and able to save the soul in particular that doth believe, not only that it is a blessed way to save sinners in general, but that it is such a way to save him in particular.”<sup>2</sup>

I adduce only one other quotation; this I take from one of the most recent works on dogmatics, that of Oosterzee. “It is impossible that a mere conviction of the intellect concerning the divinity of the gospel, still less a vague trust in God as our Benefactor and Guardian, can be denoted by this name. A certain degree of knowledge is undoubtedly necessary when we speak of faith; of the three elements into which faith is often divided—knowledge, assent, and trust—not one can be altogether wanting. Yet is this last more certainly the soul and kernel of the faith that saves the sinner. In the inmost sanctuary of the soul it prefers to fix its seat; with the whole heart man believeth unto salvation. The will, too, is not to be excluded here; the well-known ‘*nemo credit nisi volens*’ has a deep meaning. Hence, too, in the N. T. mention is often made of the obedience of faith, as if to denote that by faith a deed, a moral act, is meant, by which the man is brought over from the old into an entirely new state. But the sphere in which this act is effected is still the heart which voluntarily and unconditionally surrenders itself to Him whom it absolutely trusts.”<sup>3</sup>

ℓ. In these passages, selected from widely different sources, there is a substantial accordance of doctrine with some differences, not of expression merely, but of sentiment as well. We may gather from them what is the Catholic doctrine concerning saving faith; and they suggest to me also the

<sup>1</sup> *Doctrine of Justification by Faith, Works*, vol. v. p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Evidences of the Faith of God’s Elect, Works*, v. p. 419.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 640.

topics on which I would now proceed to make some observations.

(a) In the commencement of the first extract the following statement occurs: "Reconciliation with God having been effected through Christ in that He in the place of man hath fulfilled the law and made satisfaction for the sins of the world," etc. The part of this statement on which I would animadvert is the assertion that Christ in the place of man hath fulfilled the law as well as made satisfaction for the sins of the world. The latter assertion contains a great truth; the former asserts what has no countenance from Scripture, is in itself erroneous, and has been the basis of one of the most pernicious heresies which in later times has infested the Church. It is not true that Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in the place of man. Scripture nowhere asserts this. Our Lord, in the fulness of time, appeared in our nature and was subject to the law to which we as God's creatures are subject. That law He honoured, that law He perfectly obeyed. But He obeyed it for Himself, and not in the place of man. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and His obedience, an obedience even unto death, was part of the price which He paid for man's redemption; but it was obedience, not in the place of man, but obedience personal and real, rendered as due by Himself to God. From this its whole worth is derived; had His obedience been vicarious, it would not have been really His, and could not have been any part of the satisfaction which He made for sins. And then see what is fairly deducible from this position. If Christ fulfilled the law for man, in the place of man, just as He made satisfaction to divine justice in the place of man, then man is no more required to obey the law than he is required to make satisfaction for sin. If Christ fulfil the law for me, if He obeyed in my room and place, then the law has no further demand on me; my Substitute has already obeyed for me, and it would be a mere work of supererogation on my part were I to set myself to obey the law. A basis is thus laid for the whole structure of Antinomianism. That system is not founded, as is often said, on the assertion that the moral law has been abrogated, or at least is no longer binding on Christians; such an assertion, though it may find vogue among the

illiterate, and may lie at the basis of the coarse and vulgar Antinomianism that may sometimes be found in the slums of the religious world, could never for a moment be entertained by any man of even moderate intelligence. The moral law being the expression of the divine mind, and having its basis in the divine essence, can no more be abrogated or annulled than God Himself can be abrogated or annulled. That law must continue for ever, and from its obligations none can be freed by whom intelligence is retained. This all intelligent Antinomians admit. But they say, The law has been fulfilled by Christ. He has obeyed it, and done all that it requires in the room and place of His people; and the law can no more justly require them to obey it than a man whose debt has been paid by another can be justly required to pay it again himself. This is the insidious doctrine on which theoretical Antinomianism rests, and unfortunately the elementary principle out of which all this logically flows, viz. that Christ fulfilled the law in the place of men, is found, not only in the creeds of some of the Churches of the Reformation, but also in the beliefs of many Christian people who would shudder at the idea of their being ever by any process led to either theoretical or practical Antinomianism. All the more necessary is it that the unsoundness of the principle should be exposed, and thus people be put on their guard against accepting what would, if logically followed, lead them down into the ooze and mire of Antinomian apostasy.

(b) It is not obscurely intimated in several of the passages above cited, that the faith which saves is a mental act produced in man by God, that it is not merely a natural state or energy coming into operation according to mere natural laws, but it is a result of divine action on the mind—that faith, in short, is, as the apostle expresses it, “the gift of God.” This may be said to be the almost unanimous judgment of theologians of all schools within the evangelical Churches. By some, however, it is questioned, and there have been some even among ourselves who have strenuously maintained that faith is no more a divine gift than judgment or memory or any other mental energy. It would appear that even as far back as the early days of Augustine this view was held by some. Augustine himself tells us he held it in the

early part of his Christian life. In one of his latest works, *Retractationes*, after quoting 1 Cor. iv. 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" he goes on to say, "By which testimony I also am convicted, since I erred in a similar manner, thinking that the faith by which we believe in God is not the gift of God, but is in us from ourselves, and that we by it obtain the gifts of God by means of which we may live soberly, justly, and piously in this world. Nor did I think that faith was anticipated by grace, so that by it there should be given to us what we should profitably ask, except in so far as we could not believe, if there had not preceded the preaching of the truth; but when the gospel was preached, our consent to it, I thought, was our own proper act, and was to us out of ourselves. Which error of mine some of my works, written before I was a bishop, sufficiently indicate."<sup>1</sup>

As to the point here touched on, if faith is merely the belief of a proposition, then it is, so far as the mere mental act of believing is concerned, undoubtedly of ourselves. But inasmuch as our dealing with evidence is very much affected by our prejudices, and as our wills may and do influence our understandings in that way; and inasmuch as man's prejudices and natural inclinations are averse from God's truth, there needs a special influence from above to overcome this, and incline men to attend to and receive the truth. Even, therefore, were we to regard faith as simply an intellectual act, there would still be a sense in which saving faith would be the gift of God. But if saving faith be more than a mere intellectual act, if it be not merely the assent of the understanding but the consent of the heart to the truth, if it be not merely the assurance that Christ is able to save but the rest and trust of the soul in Him as a Saviour; then still more clearly and emphatically must it be pronounced the gift of God. Until the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, there is no true knowledge of Christ; and until the same divine agent works in us to will

<sup>1</sup> *Retract.*, i. 23. Comp. Aug., *Expos. quarundam propositionum in Ep. ad Rom.*, c. 60 and 61.

and to do, there is no inclination on our part to come to Christ. Faith, therefore, is not to us out of ourselves, but is, as the apostle calls it, "the gift of God," or, as he elsewhere expresses it, we "believe, according to the working of His mighty power" (Eph. i. 19).

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### 4. *Sanctification.*

We proceed now to the subject of Sanctification. We shall consider—

##### (1.) *Its Nature.*

The word *sanctify*, as used in Scripture, answers to various forms of the Hebrew verb *קָדַשׁ*, "to be fresh, new, clean," and in its ordinary usage, "to be holy" or "consecrated," and the Greek *ἁγιάζω*, which properly means "to make ἅγιος, to cleanse, to purify," but which in Scripture follows the usage of the Hebrew word, and often signifies "to set apart," "to consecrate." It is often said that the primary idea of the word is that of setting apart from an ordinary to a sacred use, and that from this comes the usage of it in a moral sense as denoting what is pure and good. But the reverse is the true statement on this head: the primary conception is that of newness, freshness, unstainedness, purity; and as this was either an essential condition of the consecration of any person or thing to God, or became a certain concomitant of it, the word came secondarily to have the meaning of consecrated or set apart from a common to a sacred use. In the N. T. the term *ἁγιασμός*, "sanctification," is always used in a moral sense as equivalent to a state of purity of heart and life; and this must be held to be the primary and proper sense of the term "sanctify" as used of persons in the Scriptures.

Sanctification, then, is the moral renewal of the man,

whereby he is brought back from a state of sinfulness to his pristine state of conformity to the image of God. It implies the destruction within him of the power of sin as a dominant power, his emancipation from the thralldom of evil, and the gradual strengthening within him of the principle of the regenerated life, so that in due time the new nature which has been given to him arrives at its perfect development, and he becomes holy as God is holy. Having received a legal deliverance from sin by justification, he receives also in sanctification a moral deliverance from sin, and is led on step by step to perfect goodness. As the work advances within him, his apprehensions of divine things become clearer and brighter; his love for divine things becomes more intense and constant; his desires after God and after conformity to His will more ardent and steadfast; his efforts to be good and to do good more unconstrained and earnest, and his whole nature and activity are brought more and more under the controlling influence of pure and elevated and godly motives. Growing in intelligence and spiritual excellence day by day, his path becomes brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, until at length he is fitted to dwell in the perfect light and the perfect purity of heaven.

Other terms and modes of expression besides sanctification and its cognates are used in Scripture to designate this state. As being a *new* state compared with the natural state of man, it is called the "new man," and the man who is the subject of it is said "to walk in newness of life." As being the result of a change which has its seat *in the inner spiritual nature*, it is called *ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, "the inward man;" *ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν*, "our inner part;" *ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος*, "the hidden man of the heart," expressions which do not, as they are often interpreted, refer merely to the intellectual and moral nature of man, but rather to that as the seat of the new spiritual life and condition of the believer. As being a restoration to man's primordial and normal state, the process by which it is effected is called *ἀνακαίνωσις*, "a renewal," *ἀνακαίνωσις Πνεύματος Ἁγίου*; and the state itself is denominated, *νέος ἄνθρωπος ἀνακαινούμενος εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν*, "the new man renewed into the knowledge according to the image of Him

that created him." As a restoration to the image of God, it is called *κοινωνία μετ' αὐτοῦ*, "communion with Him;" and believers as enjoying this privilege are said to be partakers of God's holiness, and partakers of a divine nature. All these varieties of expression conspire in this, that they represent the condition into which the believer is brought as one entirely different from the state in which he is by nature, and as characterized by deliverance from the power of evil and restoration to the image and likeness of God.

For the more precise elucidation of this doctrine the following observations may be made:—

*a.* Sanctification has a *positive* and a *negative* side. On the negative side it is the renunciation of sin in the love and power and practice of it; on the positive side it is the loving pursuit and hearty performance of all good. All who come after Christ must deny themselves and take up their cross; they must be as persons in whom the body of sin has been destroyed, so that they can no longer serve sin; they must have the flesh crucified, with its affections and lusts; they must cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit; they must go from the gracious forgiving presence of God as under a solemn obligation to sin no more, remembering that he that is born of God cannot sin. And whilst they are thus dead to sin and seek wholly to abstain from it, they must also be alive to righteousness and endeavour to follow after all goodness, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. Being by regeneration the children of God, they are commanded to be "imitators of God as dear children." As the existence of this changed state of heart and soul shows itself in the pursuit and performance of all that God enjoins, believers as the subjects of it are called *τέκνα ὑπακοῆς*, "children of obedience," and they are said to be "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Being made free from sin, they are to become the servants of God, and to have their fruit unto holiness; they are to yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Having put off the old man, they are to put on the new man, which after



God is created in righteousness and true holiness. As they are to abstain from all sin, they are to aim at all holiness; "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise," they are to "think on these things" (Matt. xvi. 24; Rom. vi. 6; Gal. v. 21; 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 John iii. 9; Eph. v. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1, 14; Rom. vi. 13, 22; Phil. iv. 8). This state of freedom from the power of sin and of conformity to the will of God is what theologians have termed *nova obedientia*, "new obedience."

b. The change thus effected is *universal*. By this it is meant that it embraces the entire man, body and soul. It is not a mere improvement of the outward conduct, nor is it a mere change of opinion or feeling. It is a renewal of the whole man. He is cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. He is sanctified wholly, body, soul, and spirit. His intellect is enlightened by the rays of divine truth, so that he who once was darkness is now light in the Lord. His affections are set on things above, which are at God's right hand, where Christ sitteth. The whole range of his active duties is brought under the influence of his religion, and he is taught that whether he eat or drink or whatsoever he does, he must do all to the glory of God (1 Thess. v. 23; Eph. v. 8; Col. iii. 2; 1 Cor. x. 31). "It affects and improves indiscriminately," says Dwight, "all the virtues of the Christian character; love to God and to mankind; faith, repentance, justice, truth, kindness, humility, forgiveness, charity, generosity, public spirit, meekness, patience, fortitude, temperance, moderation, candour, and charitableness of judgment. It influences ruling passions and appetites; habits of thought and affection, of language and practice. It prompts to all the acts of piety; to prayer, praise, attendance upon the sanctuary and its ordinances, our sanctification of the Sabbath, Christian communion, and Christian discipline."<sup>1</sup>

c. This change is *progressive*. It is not effected all at once; and when once commenced, it is its tendency to go steadily forward unto perfection. In asserting the believer's deliverance from sin we by no means intend to assert that he

<sup>1</sup> *Theology Explained and Improved*, p. 190, Ser. lxxxiii.

never sins. To such an assertion both the Bible and our own experience would stand directly opposed. The condition of the believer in this world is one of constant struggle to maintain the good that is within him against the pernicious influences which the evil that is around him has still power to exert over him. All through his career the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and oftentimes under the severity of the struggle he is ready to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Whatever progress he may have made in the divine life, something of the old carnal nature still lurks within him, and he has constant occasion to feel that the work of his spiritual renovation is yet far from complete. In what sense, then, can he be said to be delivered from sin? To this it may be replied, that his deliverance from sin consists in his being freed from the bewitching and commanding power of sin. He is no longer indifferent to the evil of sin; he feels it to be a thing not only pernicious in its consequences, but most hateful in itself, so that he endeavours to avoid it; when it assails him he resists it; and if at any time he is betrayed into it, the consciousness of this gives him pain and fills him with humiliation. He is no longer a lover of sin; formerly he rolled it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, and he was tempted to the commission of it by the pleasure he felt in it; but now the prevailing tendency of his nature is to recoil from it, the thought of it is painful to him, and he feels the commission of it to be no longer pleasant, but bitter and degrading. He is no longer a slave to sin; once he was such, subject to the tyranny of evil lusts and passions, led captive by Satan at his pleasure, and hardly dreaming of the possibility of resisting the influences that were urging him on to transgression and folly; but now he enjoys liberty from this, sin no more reigns in his heart as that he should obey it in the lusts thereof; Christ has condemned sin in the flesh; and the believer, having died with Christ to sin, has obtained a liberty, having died to that wherein he was held. Thus, though the believer still exemplifies the unhappy characteristic of our fallen race, that there is no man that liveth and sinneth not, it is nevertheless true that he is delivered from sin and is set upon a

course the consummation of which will be his entire and perfect and eternal freedom from all evil.

And, once entered on this course, his tendency is to advance in it, and it is only by such advance that the climax of his renovated state is to be reached. Unhappily, however, this advance is neither uniform nor uninterrupted. It is not uniform, because sometimes it advances in one part of his nature whilst it does not advance in another; and it is not uninterrupted, because many things occur which hinder him in his course, and sometimes turn him altogether aside from it. According to its true idea, sanctification is the rectification of the entire man, the growth in goodness of his whole nature, the development of a holy germ affecting all his powers and tendencies; and had this renovating power its perfect work, we should see the new man, the inward man, growing day by day in a perfect balance and symmetry of all its parts, and that going steadily onward to its glorious consummation. But for this purpose the process would require to be conducted *in vacuo*. Conducted as it is amid many disturbing and hostile influences, it is constantly interrupted, and its manifestations caused to be erratic and irregular. Hence we see in actual life spiritual phenomena which, if we neglect to take this into account, it might be difficult for us to explain. How often, *e.g.*, do we see men whose spiritual nature assumes a wholly one-sided character; men who advance rapidly in one department of spiritual attainment, but make little or no progress in any other; men whose judgments are enlightened in spiritual truth, but whose affections are not proportionately attracted by spiritual objects; or men whose hearts are filled with growing zeal, piety, and devotion, but whose judgments are not proportionally instructed in the principles of revealed truth? Familiarity with such phenomena prevents our being surprised by them, but in reality they are monstrosities as much so in the spiritual world as a child whose one side grew faster than the other would be in the natural world. Their existence indicates a want of perfect health and soundness, or the influence of disturbing causes that prevent the symmetrical and normal development of the new man. It is not desirable that such a state of things should exist, and the attention of

Christian people is to be called to it, and they should be exhorted to watch and strive against it; but so long as the process has to be conducted in our corrupted natures, and amid all the unfriendly influences by which we are surrounded here, it cannot be but that this more or less will be found characterizing the actual Christianity of men.

In asserting the progressive character of sanctification in the believer, then, due allowance must be made for these phenomena. As we do not expect the believer to become perfect all at once; as we recognize his life to be a race, a conflict, a growth amid pernicious and opposing influences, we must lay our account with seeing his course often retarded, often interrupted, sometimes for a season it may be altogether suspended; and we are not to be surprised should we sometimes find the irregular and unsymmetrical development which more or less belongs to all of us in some cases breaking out into manifestations which are not only eccentric, but even offensive. Still, withal it may be confidently affirmed that wherever the work of sanctification is truly begun it will go forward towards its consummation, and that by as certain a law as that which conducts the river to the ocean, notwithstanding its many windings and its many different states—now full to its banks, and now creeping with hardly distinguishable current among the stones that fill its bed.

*d.* This process, though thus ever tending to perfection, is never, so far as we can see, completed on earth, nor have we any reason from Scripture to expect that this should be the case. It is not meant by this to deny that believers are to place ultimate perfection before them as the end at which they aim, and with anything short of which they are not to rest contented; this were to lower the standard of their ambition, to weaken the motives to Christian exertion, to encourage a tendency to rest satisfied with low and partial attainments in the divine life, and to sanction the conduct of those who would make the impossibility of attaining perfection an excuse for ceasing to struggle against sin and to resist temptation. Nor is it meant to affirm that the impossibility of attaining to perfect holiness in this world is a *physical* impossibility, and therefore one that excuses us for not being perfect. On the contrary, we maintain that every Christian man *ought* to be

perfect—perfect as God is perfect, holy as God is holy ; and that the sole reason why he is not so is neither that this is in itself impossible, nor that any irresistible external power prevents it, nor that God arbitrarily withholds the necessary aid for the attainment of it, but that man's will is not constantly and supremely bent upon this as an end on the attainment of which all his faculties and resources are to be made to bear. The impossibility is a moral one, not a natural or extraneous one, and therefore one which adds to rather than diminishes the guilt of those whose conduct it affects. In fine, it is not meant that perfection is reached only in the heavenly state ; that is a state of unsullied perfection, and all there are perfect in holiness ; but it is not there that any are *made* perfect. Before any being can enter heaven he must *be* perfect, as into it entereth nothing that is evil ; all sin, all defilement, and all pollution must be removed from the soul *before* it can be admitted there. A soul that passes from its body with aught of the impurity or imperfection of earth attaching to it has that on it which must ever bar its entrance to the heavenly paradise. But this is not irreconcilable with the assertion that sinless perfection cannot be reached on earth, because that entire separation of the soul from every taint and spot of sin which is essential to its entrance into heaven may take place in the instant of its separation from the body at death. As it leaves the flesh, which is the seat of sin, it leaves sin also behind it, and passes into the presence of God pure as when He first breathed it into the man whom He had formed.

What we seek to oppose here is the doctrine of those who teach that it is possible for a redeemed sinner to become so perfectly a saint in this world as to live in it absolutely without sin, and who assert that such absolute sinless perfection actually has been attained by some. As regards the *fact* thus asserted, I believe it may be safely met by the counter assertion that no such case of sinless perfection has ever been substantiated whenever the proper tests have been applied. It is possible for a man to so surround himself with the admiration and confidence of others as that to them he shall appear a perfect saint ; but let such an one come under the impartial scrutiny of those who are not so blinded in his favour, and let him be

subjected to some of those severer tests of temper or of principle to which a man is liable to be exposed in this world, and it may be with almost certain confidence asserted that he will show that he has not yet attained, neither is already perfect. Nor is this to be wondered at. All such pretensions and expectations are founded, not upon the sure word of God, but on some fond and delusive fancies or conclusions of the human mind. Scripture presents to us but one perfect specimen of humanity; and whilst it calls us to admire that, and to make that our model and our aim, it takes care to show us in all the other instances it presents to us how vain it is for even the best of men and most devoted of God's servants to flatter himself with the expectation of fully reaching that end while encompassed with the frailties of the flesh and surrounded by the temptations of a wicked world. Had God presented to us a single instance in the Bible of a mere man like ourselves attaining to sinless perfection in this life, or had He given us a single assurance that such an attainment is fairly within the reach of His people here, it would be our duty to admit the possibility of such a thing being actually realized under favourable circumstances, and to make the attainment of it a distinct object of expectation, effort, and prayer for ourselves. But in the absence of any such assurance, and with the cases of such men as Abraham, Moses, David, Paul, and John before us to show that even those most highly favoured of God, and whose attainments in holiness and purity were the highest on record, yet fell far short of perfection; it can hardly be regarded as anything short of sinful presumption in any to pretend to have attained to such perfection, and as a mere fostering of carnal pride and self-confidence to teach that such perfection is within the reach of any in this life. Suffice it for us to know that ere the believer enters heaven all stains of earth's impurity shall be washed away from him, and he shall enter the presence of the Eternal to be presented by his Great High Priest "holy, and unblamable, and unprovable in His sight."

From the view we have obtained of the nature of sanctification, it is easy to see how that differs from justification, with which it has by some been confounded. The difference between the two has been admirably stated in a few sentences

by Dr. Wardlaw, and I cannot do better than cite his words:—

“The distinction lies simply in this, that the one blessing refers to [legal] state and condition, the other to personal character. Justification is the opposite of a state of guilt and condemnation; sanctification is the opposite of a state [character] of alienation of heart from God—the opposite of moral impurity and corruption. Justification consists in being judicially accepted of God; sanctification in being devoted to God, made His in heart, and fitted for His worship and service. Justification we possess on the ground of the righteousness of another placed to our account; sanctification is the infusion of the principles of righteousness into our souls. In justification we receive a title to heaven; in sanctification we are made meet for the enjoyment of heaven. Justification is an act of pardon or remission; sanctification is a progressive work of spiritual renovation.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the distinction between justification and sanctification. It is a distinction so marked, and one so clearly recognized in Scripture, that the wonder is that any should have fallen into the mistake of identifying the two. But, as Cicero says of philosophers, that there is no opinion, however absurd, that has not found some one to defend it, so we may say of theologians, that there is no error so patent as not to have found some one to assert and defend it.

## (2.) *Sanctification—its Causes.*

Having considered the nature of sanctification, we have next to consider how it is produced or effected.

a. The *primary* and chief agent in producing sanctification is God Himself. This Scripture most distinctly and fully asserts. Our Lord prayed to God for His disciples that He would sanctify them. The apostle prayed for his brethren that “the very God of peace would sanctify them wholly,” and that their “whole spirit and soul and body might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. v. 23). He gives thanks for them because God had “from the beginning chosen them to salvation through

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. iii. p. 108.

sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. ii. 13). St. Peter describes those to whom he wrote as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Ep. i. 2). St. Jude addresses those to whom he wrote as them that "are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ" (ver. 1). Believers are said to have been quickened from the death of sin by God, to be His workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works, to be born of God, to live by the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit, to have the first-fruits of the Spirit, and such-like expressions, in all of which the agency of God in the regeneration and sanctification of believers is clearly recognized. And how could it be otherwise? If the change which a man experiences in entering on salvation is a being born again, a being created anew, how can this be effected save by Him who alone giveth life, and who alone can create?

(a) It is to the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, that Scripture ascribes this as His special work. Not only are believers said generally to be sanctified by the Spirit, to live and walk by the Spirit, to be born of the Spirit, to be changed into the image of God by the Lord the Spirit; but when we come to look at the subject in detail, we find that every part of the new nature and character which the believer receives and bears is communicated to him by the Holy Spirit, that it is by the renewal of the Holy Ghost that he is brought into a state of salvation, and that it is by the abiding in him and the working in him of that divine Agent that his salvation is perfected, and that he is made complete in that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. Is it essential to that end that our carnal lusts and tendencies should be subdued and destroyed? "Ye through the Spirit," says the apostle, "do mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. viii. 13). Is a sense of God's love dwelling in us and influencing us a part of the new nature? "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us" (Rom. v. 5). Is access to God one of the privileges of the regenerate? "We have access unto the Father by the one Spirit" (Eph. ii. 18). Is a sense



of sonship, and the feeling of children towards God as our Father, a characteristic of the renewed soul? "God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Is strength to resist temptation, overcome evil, and perform duty a privilege of the child of God? God strengthens "by His Spirit with might in the inner man" (Eph. iii. 16). Is prayer such as rises above the limits of natural devotion and becomes a true spiritual pleading with God? "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). Is hope a privilege of the Christian, so that though once without hope he has now a good hope which cheers and animates him amid the trials and conflicts of life? "The God of hope shall fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xv. 13). Is God's presence and constant nearness to the soul the privilege of the true Christian? It is by His Spirit that God dwells in the hearts of His people, for "we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). Is calm and well-grounded assurance that we are His a blessed privilege of the believer? "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). God "hath given us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. v. 5). By His Spirit we "are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). And, in fine, is it the believer's privilege to stand by the side of the tomb, and whether he commits to it the remains of some beloved friend who has fallen asleep in Jesus, or anticipates the time when he himself shall go down to it to mingle with the clods of the valley, to lift up his head with joy and look forward to the day when Christ shall appear to call His people from their graves to reign with Him in endless life? It is through the Spirit that he enjoys this good hope; for if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us (Rom. viii. 11). Thus, all through, from the commencement to the close, it is the Spirit that reneweth us.

The Holy Spirit thus fulfils to the people of God all that is implied in the designation under which Christ promised Him to the disciples when He said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you ἄλλον παράκλητον, that He may abide with you, even the Spirit of truth" (John xiv. 16). We have no English word which fully expresses what the term παράκλητος denotes. In the A. V. it is rendered by Comforter and by Advocate; but neither of these adequately represents it. Derived from the passive of the verb παρακαλέω, it denotes one who is called in order to render some help or service to another, and thus is susceptible of various applications. A person may be called to represent another or to plead his cause, and so the word may be used of an advocate who represents a party at a judicial trial and pleads for him; accordingly, Jesus Christ, who represents His people, and makes intercession for them at the bar of God, is called their παράκλητος (1 John ii. 1); and in this sense the word is used by the classical writers, and by Philo Judæus. A person may be called to help another by teaching him, by giving him information, by leading him into the truth in any department; and so Jesus Christ was the παράκλητος of His disciples when with them on earth as their teacher, and it is specially in this sense that He calls the Holy Spirit "*another Paraclete*," who was to succeed Him, and carry forward the work He had begun, by testifying of Him and guiding them into all the truth (John xv. 26, xvi. 13). A person may be called to help another by fortifying him to endure trial, strengthening him to overcome difficulty, and consoling him under sorrow; and so the Holy Spirit, who gives strength and peace and consolation, acts the part of Paraclete to the people of Christ. The only English word that at all approximates to an adequate representation of the Greek is "helper;" but even this only partially represents it.

(b) But whilst the Holy Spirit is thus the prime Agent in the sanctification of men, we must beware of so conceiving of His agency as to ignore or deny the agency of men themselves in this matter. Man is not simply passive whilst the process of sanctification is going on in him. As an intelligent and moral agent it is only as he himself, in possession of right principles, wills to be holy, cultivates those affections which

tend to holiness, and subdues and resists those that have an opposite tendency, that he becomes holy and advances in sanctification. A divine harmony cannot be evoked from him simply by the strings of his nature being played upon by a power from without; these strings must spontaneously move, whilst at the same time they are touched and acted on by the Divine Spirit. Hence, while it is said that it is God that sanctifieth, it is also laid as a duty on believers, that as He that hath called them is holy, so they must be holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. i. 16). Whilst it is distinctly taught that it is by grace that men are saved, and that grace is sovereign and free, believers are at the same time exhorted to grow in grace as their own spontaneous act, and they are besought not to receive the grace of God in vain (2 Pet. iii. 18; 2 Cor. vi. 1). Whilst faith is said to be the gift of God, it is the man himself who must believe in order to be saved (Eph. ii. 8; Acts xvi. 31). Whilst it is through the Spirit that we are to mortify the deeds of the body so as to live, it is we who are to do this, we who, as the apostle elsewhere expresses it, are to mortify our members which are upon the earth, we who are to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts (Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5; Gal. v. 24). Whilst all the graces of the renewed character are the fruit of the Spirit, it is we who are to bring forth this fruit so as to manifest it to the praise of the glory of God's grace (Phil. i. 11). There is thus, be it observed, a concurrence of willing and working between the Divine Spirit and the man himself in the matter of his sanctification. If it is God who works in us of His own good pleasure to will and to do, it is we who on this very account are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12).

How it is that God works in us so as to influence our will and direct our actions, whilst it is we who will and we who act as free agents, we cannot tell; there is here a mystery which we cannot understand or explain. But certain it is that in the work of sanctification there is such a co-operation of the Divine Spirit and the human that the result is both man's work and God's work. As a profound thinker<sup>1</sup> has said,

<sup>1</sup> Duncan, *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 28.

"There is a true and a false synergy. That God works half and man the other half is false; that God works all, man does all, is true." We must beware, however, of so representing this operation of the Spirit in the sanctification of men as to imagine that each individual volition is excited in the mind of the believer by the Holy Spirit, and each individual act is determined and directed by Him. I do not suppose that is what is meant by God's working in us to will and to do. Practically we know that our acts are determined by our volitions, and our volitions are evoked by our judgments; as Edwards has sufficiently showed, it is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, that is, as the mind judges, is the strongest that determines volition. But our volitions are not our will; they are mere casual or arbitrary exercises of the conative faculty. The will is the spiritual self-determining principle in man, a nature which is capable of being depraved and capable also of being restored and renovated as a whole. Now, the effect of sin on man's will is to deprave it, to bring it into a state of unsoundness and disease; and this being the case, man has no power to restore himself. Having brought himself under the power of evil, he cannot originate a state of holiness for himself; any more than when the central life-power in his body is destroyed he can of himself revive. As has been justly said, "When an evil moral state has once been originated, and the will has once responsibly formed a sinful character and nature, a central radical change in the direction and tendency of this faculty is, from the very nature of the case, then out of its power. For the will is not merely the surface-faculty of single volitions over which the individual has arbitrary control, but also that central and inmost active principle into which all the powers of cognition and feeling are grafted, as into the very core and substance of the personality itself. So that when the will, in this full and adequate sense of the word, puts forth its sinful self-determination, it takes the whole soul along with it from the centre to the circumference, leaving no remainder of power in reserve, by which the existing direction of its movement can be reversed. The fall of the will, therefore, though a free and self-moved procedure, brings this faculty into such a relation to holiness that it is utterly impossible for it to

recover itself back into its primitive state: it being a contradiction to attribute a power of originating holiness to a faculty the *whole* of whose power is already absorbed in an unintermittent determination to sin."<sup>1</sup>

Man, then, as a sinful being cannot recover himself, cannot effect a radical moral change in himself, so as from having a nature depraved and unholy to become holy and good. This can be effected only by that divine power by which all life, natural and spiritual, is originated; and this God effects by renewing the man in the spirit of his mind, regenerating him, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit so works in the soul that the will is delivered from the evil bias under which it has been brought; the man is restored to moral freedom; and so is enabled to pursue the path of holiness and righteousness which is set before him, and thereby to work out his own salvation.

(c) This subject has much occupied the attention of German theologians. At the time of the Reformation the doctrine of Augustine as to man's passivity in the matter of conversion and sanctification was embraced by Luther, and at first also by Melancthon, in its most rigid form. "As early," says Möhler, "as the famous disputation at Leipsic, Luther maintained against Eck this doctrine, and compared man to a saw which, passive in the hand of the workman, must move hither and thither as he urges it."<sup>2</sup> In his own writings, Luther at a later period compares fallen man to the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was changed, to the trunk of a tree, to a stone, to a statue wanting life, which has the use neither of eyes, nor ears, nor of any of the senses, nor of the heart.<sup>3</sup> Melancthon, who, in the first edition of his *Loci Communes*, gave expression to equally rigid views, subsequently recoiled from them, and in the later editions of his work presents the modified doctrine which came to be designated the Synergistic from its asserting a *συνεργία* of the divine and the human will in the regeneration and sanctification of men. This doctrine the Lutheran Church rejected and condemned; but it has never ceased to find supporters

<sup>1</sup> Professor Shedd, *Literary Essays*, reprinted in Dickinson's *Theol. Quarterly*, April 1880, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Symbolik*, p. 109, 5th ed.

<sup>3</sup> *In Genes.* c. xix.

and advocates among the divines of Germany. "In the first times of our Church," says Ullmann, "it was severely condemned; nevertheless it has always again emerged, and in each age had pious and thoughtful Christians who have accepted it. And that naturally; for there is an element of truth in it; it has its basis in the gospel and in the ethical consciousness." Ullmann proceeds to set forth what he regards as the truth on this point; and his statements seem to me so important that I feel constrained to present them to you in a translation of his words:—

"The classical passage in this relation is that of the Apostle Paul, Phil. ii. 12, 13: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do,'—words which may be taken as the motto of each individual Christian life, and which we may here make the subject of a close examination.

"At first these words seem to contain a sharp contradiction. If we are to work out our salvation, it would seem as if it could not be said that God works in us to will and to do; and if God works in us to will and to do what is good, it appears, on the other hand, as if we might at our ease contemplate this work of God in us, and need not to strive thereby with fear and trembling; least of all can one believe that there lies a reason for our striving with fear and trembling in the fact that God works the willing and the performing; rather might one say this is what should raise us above all and every fear.

"We may safely assume that this contradiction, marked as it may seem on a superficial view, is only apparent. A man of the apostle's depth and power of thought could not place together two positions of so contradictory a character unless he had the most definite consciousness of their inner unity. This unity, indeed, is not exhibited in the passage itself, but we learn it from the whole connection of the Christian doctrine of salvation. What the gospel in its entirety teaches concerning the attainment of a condition of salvation is here expressed in two short clauses; and whilst these two clauses contain the fundamental results of the Christian life-experience, they are also rightly to be estimated only from the complex of the same.

"Christianity requires, in order that salvation may be effected in the man, the co-working of two different agents, God and man, grace and the personal will. Man needs God, but God can work salvation only in the man, the willing man. Without God, the fountain of life and blessedness, there is no full life and salvation thinkable; but without my consent, without decision of the mind within, the divinely-offered salvation cannot become my own. All that is good and glorious in man is effected by the co-operation of these two fundamental factors, the divine and the human, is a tissue woven of grace and free choice. But in this tissue grace is the web and free choice the woof, so that our ability and will to do anything by self-decision and free choice for our salvation rests on the creative and ordering will of the divine grace; and hence the apostle ascribes not only the doing, but the willing to God. As much as God is higher than man, so much higher is that which God does in and on us from the first beginning of our existence to its highest conceivable perfection, than what we ourselves do. The human vanishes to the pious contemplation before the divine, and consequently the latter is often by the apostle exclusively adduced.

"Let us go into this matter a little more closely.

"First of all, what the apostle says is absolutely true: our salvation is God's work; He operates in us to will and to do. Can we on the profoundest reflection think it otherwise? The basis itself on which our whole higher life is developed, the spiritual and moral faculty, the Reason and Will, or however it be named, is a gift of God, a grace. It is not we that have made ourselves men, beings so richly endowed, in the image and likeness of God; it is the divine creative Will that has done this. Further, all that in the different stages and momenta of our life has acted on us, educating, enlightening, improving us, must in the last instance be referred to God and the order of things founded by Him; for from Him proceed all the formative, sustaining, and purifying powers of doctrine, of law, of moral and social intercourse, which from generation to generation, and from century to century, have operated on men; He determines the conditions under which each shall be born and grow up;

He guides, unseen by the bodily eye, but recognized by the spiritual eye, the life-course of each. Above all, what may be called a power for holiness, the gospel, the doctrine, the pattern and reconciling influence of the Saviour, is a free gift of divine love. In fact, every earnest man who has learned to know fundamentally his moral development must accord with the utterance, 'What have I which I have not received?' and so to have the right to treat the best which he has attained as not his own work, but rather as a gift from heaven. Hence, among all peoples, the thought, the conviction, that the highest attainments and deeds have proceeded from a divine inspiration and impulse. To the Christian especially it lies near to refer immediately to God what relates to his goodness and holiness. This comes essentially from faith, for it alone gives in the triumphant consciousness of the divine love the full power and joy of the good; but faith, the true, the genuine, is not man's, but God's work. For whence arises faith? Does it somehow produce itself out of itself? Is it man's thought, man's experience? He who should say this must know little of faith. No; it is a product of its object, of the creative spirit and life proceeding from this object; it proceeds from God and Christ, or from the Holy Spirit which unites the two. Faith is the vital apprehension of the whole inner essence of the divine, entire resignation to the divine, the inner fellowship with this in knowledge, love, and act. But I can apprehend a thing and can resign myself to it only when it exerts power over me; in this overmastering influence of the object on me lies properly what produces and determines my relation to it; in this lies the quickening force of my love to it and all that flows out of that love. The satisfaction and animation which nature or some genuine work of art evokes in me is not something produced by me, but is the effect of the sublime or beautiful object. So is also the living faith, though in us, not of us; rather, when the infinite greatness, holiness, and goodness of God, when the purity, glory, and love of Christ so shine into our hearts and minds that we cannot withdraw ourselves from the impression that our whole inner life is interpenetrated and dominated thereby, then do we believe. Faith is peace with God, but a peace with God which we



ourselves alone devise were no peace ; God Himself must place in our hearts the Spirit who impels us to cry, Abba, Father. Faith is assurance of the forgiveness of sins ; man, however, cannot of himself forgive sins, and he can have assurance of forgiveness only through divine witnesses and deeds which lay hold of him mightily, and incontrovertibly convince him. In all these relations it is not we who effect faith, but God Himself through the operation of His Spirit on the mind ; Christ Himself who, as He presents Himself to us in the gospel, forms it in us. Now, if faith comes from God and Christ, and if again from faith, since it is the all-overcoming assurance of the divine love, is peace and communion with God, comes salvation and joy and power for all good, it is certain, the thing being viewed in its true grounds, that it is God who works in us to will and to do what is good, and we cannot deny that our salvation is a thing wrought in us by God, a divine work.

“ But not less certain, on the other side, is it true that our salvation is not effected in us without ourselves ; it is a personal thing, and requires therefore also our personal participation. Does God work in us as non-willing, and not rather as willing ? Does He give us faith when we resist, and not rather when we yield ourselves to Him ? Man alone of all beings of which we have any experience has a religion and belief, because he is a moral being ; but a moral being cannot be thought without will and act, without personal, free, and independent life-development. Goodness undoubtedly is presented to man, both in the moral law and in the gospel, as something divinely given, but if it is to be his, man must determine himself to it ; the blessings of salvation are offered to him, but he must lay hold of them in faith, which is never without an ethical impulse and determination. Faith is ever both God's work and man's act intermingled ; and though the proper creative and productive energy is the divine power which effects faith, yet that the divine should become actually life in us, that Christ should be formed in us, can come to pass only if our will, our whole inner being, unites itself with the divine drawing. Only on this assumption have all religious-ethical exhortations and appeals of Scripture any meaning ; only on

this assumption can blame be attached to what is evil as to unbelief."<sup>1</sup>

I have presented this long extract, not because I approve of every expression or statement in it, but because, on the whole, it appears to me to furnish an admirably clear and full statement of the true synergistic doctrine as held by many of the best theologians of the present day. I say the *true* synergistic doctrine, for, as already remarked, there is a false synergism against which we must be studiously on our guard. Such, for instance, is the Pelagian doctrine concerning grace. Pelagius held that man stands in need of divine help in order to follow a course of holiness and goodness; but he supposed that the divine grace was something external that comes upon man, and aids the efforts which he himself puts forth of his own will; he even thought that this grace might be merited by man. Pelagius had no idea of a development of goodness from a new principle implanted in the soul, and of a life divinely produced unfolding itself by a process of growth where the Divine Spirit and the human co-operated. He thought only of man's being helped by an outward force to do what he had willed to do. In opposition to this Augustine taught that not by law and doctrine sounding from without, "but by an internal, occult, marvellous, and ineffable power God operates in the hearts of men, not only revelations, but also good volitions."<sup>2</sup> "It was not the view of Augustine," as Hagenbach remarks, "that man is like a stone or a stick upon whom grace works externally; he could conceive of grace as working only in the sphere of freedom."<sup>3</sup> This is the true view to take of this subject. The freedom of man's will must ever be maintained, and we must ever hold that it is only as man wills to believe in Christ and to be holy that he is saved; but at the same time we must firmly hold that it is through grace that he thus wills and acts, that works not *upon* him, but *in* him to will and to do.

b. *Sanctification — its Secondary Cause.* We have seen that the Holy Spirit is the chief Agent in producing sanctification in the soul of man, the primary cause of all

<sup>1</sup> *Theologische Aphorismen, Studien und Kritiken*, 1844, pp. 163-169.

<sup>2</sup> *De Gratia Christi*, 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of Doctrines*, i. 428, 5th ed.

goodness and holiness in the heart of one who is naturally sinful and ungodly. But the Holy Spirit is not the only Agent and Cause here; there is, besides, a secondary agent or cause which, in conjunction with the Spirit, operates this result. This is the truth or word of God as that is made known to us in the Bible, especially that word, living and vitalizing, which by the gospel is preached unto us. To this the sanctification of believers is ascribed by the sacred writers. Our Lord in praying for His disciples besought the Father to sanctify them by His truth, adding, "Thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17; see also Eph. v. 26; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 23, ii. 2).

(a) For the effecting of sanctification in men the truth or word of God is divinely adapted. It has in it a potency for this.

It is a doctrine according to godliness. It is the utterance of the mind of Him who is absolutely and perfectly holy. It is the embodiment of holy principles. It is a revelation to us of the divine perfections in all their fulness and in their harmony. It sets before us in the most striking manner the evil of sin, its ill desert, its pernicious tendency, its intrinsic hatefulness, its ruinous consequences. On the other hand, it presents to view the beauty of holiness, the excellency of truth and righteousness, the loveliness of moral goodness, the elevating and satisfying power of heavenly things as contrasted with the emptiness and vanity of all sublunary possessions and prospects, and the miserably disappointing result of all sinful indulgences and pursuits. In a word, it presents the things of God in all their excellence and in all their attractiveness, and the things of earth and of evil in all their deformity, worthlessness, and harmfulness. It has thus an internal fitness to wean the heart from the world and sin, to draw the soul to God, to enlighten the understanding in divine things, to lift up the affections to things above, to transform and renew the soul in the image of God, to withdraw the heart from all that is mean, ignoble or impure, to foster all holy affections and desires, and so to advance the work of sanctification in the soul.

This adaptation belongs to all truth as revealed to us in God's word. That word is throughout imbued with divine energy (see Heb. iv. 12; Rom. i. 16; Jer. xxiii. 29; Ps. xix. 7-9; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; 2 Thess. ii. 13).

(b) In representing the word as an agent or cause of sanctification along with, though subordinate to, the Holy Spirit, I have departed from the representation usually given of the relation of the word to the Spirit in the work of regeneration and sanctification of men. It is usual to speak of the word as the *instrument* of the Spirit, and as the *instrumental* cause of sanctification. But in what sense is the word the instrument of the Spirit? An instrument is that by means of which an intelligent agent effects a result. It is not supposed to be itself operative; its power to effect is conveyed to it from the agent by whom it is employed. But can it be said of the word that it is of itself inoperative, and can become effectual only as it is taken in hand, as it were, by the Spirit and applied to the man? This would imply that the word is defective, that it is impotent in itself to produce the effect it was designed to effect, and that it needs some power to be added to it in order to its becoming effective. But this would be tantamount to affirming that the word of God is not perfect truth, for that which needs something added to it ere it can become effective is not in itself perfect and complete. A slur is thus cast on divine revelation; and men are taught to impute the inefficiency of the gospel to make men holy to an inherent deficiency in the gospel itself, rather than to man's obstinate unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it. Besides, how is it possible for additional power to be given to truth? "Additional power may be imparted to a physical cause which operates by contact and impulse. A battering-ram, when brought into gentle contact only with the walls of a citadel would effect no breach; but give to it the momentum which the strength of fifty or a hundred men can impart and it becomes irresistible."<sup>1</sup> But what thus holds in respect of material or physical causes becomes absurdity when applied to moral causes such as truth. A moral cause does not operate on the mind as a physical cause operates on matter; nor is it capable of being rendered more effective by any influence from without. Truth cannot be made more true, a motive cannot be made more moving in itself, than it really is. Obstacles may be removed, prejudices may be overcome, truth may be presented in a clearer light so as to

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 268.

be better discerned, and motives may be more immediately brought in contact with the mind ; but to represent truth as being made more powerful by a force exerted on it from without, is to confound the physical with the mental, and to assert what from the nature of things is impossible.

It is not meant by this to assert that the word or truth by itself apart from the Spirit can operate sanctification ; all that I seek to establish is that the word is an operative cause of sanctification along with the Spirit. The Spirit does not operate, by or through the word ; nor is the word made operative by the Spirit. Both operate directly on the inner nature of the man : the Spirit by His own divine energy, the truth by its inherent power. The latter, however, is subordinate to the former. The Spirit must first work in order that the truth may work. Truth can act on the mind only as it is perceived to be truth, and is received in the love of it. It is possible to receive truth as a doctrine, as something taught, whilst it is not received as truth, whilst it is not seen and realized as truth. In this case, it is obvious, this truth as such is not really in contact with the mind, and consequently cannot operate effectually on it. There is something that obstructs the entrance of the truth in all its power into the mind ; and until this obstruction be removed, the man, whatever be the extent of his acquaintance with the truth as a doctrine, will remain practically uninfluenced by it. And here it is that the work of the Spirit comes in and is exerted in the matter of conversion and sanctification. The word is there waiting to exert its influence on the man ; but it is hindered, and cannot enter his mind because of some obstruction ; this obstruction the Holy Spirit, acting directly on the mind, removes ; and then the word enters in, and the entrance of the word, as the Psalmist expresses it, "giveth light."

Very instructive on the point now before us is the account given of the conversion of Lydia (Acts xvi. 14). Lydia was a religious woman ; she is described as one that worshipped God, a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and one who apparently was waiting for the kingdom of God and the coming of the Messiah. But she had not yet received the truth concerning Him as already come, and concerning His kingdom as already

established. This Paul preached to her, and as he preached she heard. Was this all? No; had this been all, Lydia would have gone away as she came, and the words of the apostle would have probably died out of her memory, or remained with her only as a pleasant story, or perhaps as an idle tale. But this was not permitted. The Lord, we are told, "opened her heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Here we have the whole process placed before us. Paul preached the truth, Lydia heard the truth preached, the Lord opened her heart; in consequence of this she attended to what Paul preached, gave her mind to it, and so it entered into her, and she was converted by it. Observe, not a word is said here about God's acting in any way on the word which Paul preached; not a word as to His giving it force or strength to enter Lydia's mind, not a word as to His making it more luminous or impressive. This was not needed; what was needed was that Lydia should receive the truth as truth into her mind; and this was effected when the Lord opened her heart so that she attended to the things which the apostle spake.

"It may perhaps," says Dr. Wardlaw, "serve to explain satisfactorily the connection between knowledge and salvation, to observe that the right knowledge of anything means the knowledge of it as it actually is, *i.e.* as possessing the properties which really belong to it. . . . What, then, is the knowledge that is connected with salvation? I answer, it is the knowledge of the gospel as what it actually is, as possessing the attributes that really belong to it. What are these attributes? If the gospel be true, it is not properly known unless it be known as possessing the attribute of truth. If it be really suitable to the character of God and the exigencies of men, and thus excellent and glorious, it is not properly known unless it be known as thus suitable, thus excellent and glorious. To know the meaning of a proposition or declaration, and to know that proposition or declaration as true and as excellent, are obviously two very different things. The former may exist without either belief or approbation; nay, is essentially necessary to disbelief and disapprobation. The latter implies both belief and approbation; I might almost say, is belief and approbation; it being

by no means easy to distinguish between knowing a thing as true and belief, and between knowing a thing as excellent and approving it.”<sup>1</sup> Now, as the apostle tells us, “the natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned,” *i.e.* discerned in their true character, discerned as they are in the view of God Himself. But this discernment the natural man has not. Whatever it be, whether carnality, or sinfulness, or ungodliness, or by whatever other name it be called, that obscures the mind and obstructs its discernment of the things of God, this must be taken away before the man can receive these things as they really are. This the Holy Spirit can alone effect; and He effects it not by acting on the things of God, but by acting on the mind of man. When the heart is opened to receive the truth in the love of it, when the new heart and the right spirit is put within the man, when a relish for spiritual things is created in the soul, then the truth is discerned in all its beauty and excellence, and comes with all its renovating and sanctifying power on the man’s inner nature and whole being.

(c) The word of God is thus to be regarded as an operative agent in the sanctification of men, subordinate to the agency of the Divine Spirit, but possessing in itself a fitness and a potency to effect that result. And as it is a real and efficient agent in sanctification, so it is the only agent in conjunction with the Holy Spirit. It is necessary to make this remark, because not unfrequently other agencies are adduced as collateral with this. Thus, ordinances such as the Lord’s Supper, observances such as prayer and public worship and preaching of the gospel, providential occurrences, especially such as are of a disciplinary character, are often represented as efficient means of sanctification. There is need here for careful discrimination. It is perfectly true that ordinances and observances such as those above noted must be observed and attended to if we are to advance in holiness; and it is no less true that circumstances in God’s providence are to be used by us for the same end, more especially such as are of an afflictive character and tendency, for these are sent on the people of God expressly for their “profit, that they

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 767.

may be partakers of His holiness." But it is a mistake to suppose that these have in themselves, and apart from God's word, any fitness to produce or to advance holiness. They are serviceable to this end only as they prepare the mind for the proper reception of the truth, or tend to bring it more forcibly and vividly before the mind. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace, and no man who neglects the observance of it can reasonably hope to make progress in the divine life; but in what way does this ordinance help on our sanctification? Not, surely, by any fitness in the mere eating of bread and tasting of wine to make men holy; not through any magic influence in the ceremony acting on the souls of the communicants; but solely because by means of this observance the truth concerning the person and work of Christ, and our participation in Him and the benefits of His work, is brought to our recollection and forcibly presented to us. It is the truth, then, as brought before us by this ordinance, and not the ordinance itself, that operates for our sanctification. The same is true of all the other so-called means of grace; in themselves they have no sanctifying power; they become means of sanctification simply as they help to bring the truth which sanctifies forcibly to bear upon the mind. In the same way, affliction or any other providential visitation may become instrumental in our sanctification, not because such outward circumstances have any natural fitness to promote that result, but because they prepare the mind for the fuller reception, or the more adequate appreciation, of the truth which purifies and sanctifies. The truth thus remains the only operative cause of sanctification in connection with, and subordinate to, the Holy Spirit.

### (3.) *Sanctification—its Results.*

a. From considering the causes and means of sanctification, we pass to the consideration of its *results* and manifestations. These are what Scripture describes in general terms as good works—acts and habits in accordance with God's revealed will, performed and pursued from a regard to His authority, and in harmony of mind with Him. "Christ," says the apostle, "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us



from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Tit. ii. 14). "We," he elsewhere says, "are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10). From such statements we may infer with certainty—(a) That good works are the proper characteristic of the Christian life; in them the Christian is to walk; they are to be the habit of his life; (b) That the proper effect and evidence of the purifying of the people of Christ for Himself is, that they are zealous of good works—warmly affected towards these, and earnestly devoted to them; and (c) That it is for this that they have been created anew in Christ Jesus; they have become a divine *ποίημα*, and thereby have been fitted and adapted for good works, works well-pleasing to God.

b. The phrase "good works" in the N. T. is one of very general and comprehensive import. It designates all actions which an enlightened conscience would approve, or which, tried by the standard of morality, are deserving of commendation. It is applied by our Lord to His miracles of healing and beneficence showed to the Jews (John x. 32); it is applied to the becoming behaviour of a Christian matron who brings up her children well, is hospitable and beneficent, and whose seemly conduct is her great ornament (1 Tim. v. 10, ii. 10); it is applied to deeds of charity and acts of beneficence (Acts ix. 36); and it is applied to general good conduct, the conduct of one who is a pattern to the saints in all virtue and godliness (Tit. ii. 7). It embraces all that is enunciated in detail by the apostle when writing to the Philippians (Phil. iv. 8) and to Titus (Tit. ii. 11–14). This is the great lesson which the gospel of salvation teaches, and in this we have a clear, comprehensive, and sufficient description of all morality and goodness. These are to be taken, not specially, but generically, *i.e.* as standing each for a class of virtues, and not simply as designating one solitary virtue a-piece. By *sobriety*, *i.e.* as the word properly means, prudential moderation (*σωφρόνως*), that which is dictated by a wise regard to the proprieties of things, may be understood all virtue that man owes to himself; man's duty to himself being summed up in the gratification of his natural desires

and appetites in moderation and under prudential restraint ; in other words, in the temperate, moderate, prudent indulgence of the physical impulses of our nature ; under *righteousness* (*δικαίως*) is included all that we owe to our fellow-beings, all those feelings and actions which we are morally bound to entertain and render towards the beings around us according to their relations ; and by *godliness* (*εὐσέβως*) we are to understand all those feelings and actions which we owe to God as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. Under these three heads may be registered the whole duty of man. And as the effecting of these virtues in men is the end of the gospel of grace made known to men, we may fairly conclude that the good works of which the people whom Christ purifies unto Himself are to be zealous, are those virtues which are comprehended under these three general designations.

As it is for good works that the people of God have been created anew, and as the effecting of these in them is the design of the gospel dispensation under which they have been brought, it is of *necessity* that they should "maintain good works." To this they are strenuously exhorted, both by our Lord and by His apostles (Matt. v. 16 ; Col. i. 10 ; Heb. x. 23, 24 ; 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12).

c. Good works are thus necessary ; but for what are they necessary ? Not, as the Roman Catholics teach, that they may merit increase of grace and eternal life,<sup>1</sup> which is an utterly unscriptural doctrine ; a doctrine in itself absurd, for as the apostle reasons, "If by grace, it is no more of works ; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace ; otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. xi. 6) ; and a doctrine misleading and pernicious, inasmuch as it tends to lead those who receive it away from Christ as the sole author of salvation, and from faith in Him as the sole medium of eternal life, to an endeavour to work out a righteousness of their own by which they may merit full and complete salvation. Good works are necessary, not only as the fruits and manifestations of the actuality of sanctification in the soul, but also as they are the indispensable means by which we are to work out our own salvation. They are the outgrowth and manifestation of a holy principle

<sup>1</sup> *Concil. Trid.*, cap. ii. can. 32.

within ; and as they proceed from this, so they react upon it, strengthening and deepening it and rendering more easy and sure its ultimate triumph over all the evil principles which sin has implanted in us. Without the steadfast, consistent, and persevering pursuit and practice of good works, the spiritual life will become languid and feeble within us. Nothing can supply their place in respect of this. "Neither," exclaims the eloquent Chrysostom, "neither baptism nor the remission of sins, nor knowledge, nor the communion of mysteries, nor the holy table, nor the enjoyment of the body, nor the fellowship of the blood,—no, not one of these can profit us if we do not lead a life right, and admirable, and removed from all sin."<sup>1</sup>

#### (4.) *Sanctification—its Relation to Salvation.*

As good works are necessary to sanctification, so also sanctification is itself necessary to salvation. *a.* Sanctification of believers is the grand end and design of the Saviour's propitiatory work (Tit. ii. 11-14 ; Eph. v. 25-27). He "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people." *b.* The sanctification of believers is the object of the divine will. "This is the will of God, even our sanctification,"—His will both as that which He desires and that which He enjoins (1 Thess. iv. 3-7 ; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16). *c.* The sanctification of believers is the grand end and design of God's purposes of grace in redemption (2 Thess. ii. 13 ; 1 Pet. i. 2). *d.* The sanctification of believers is a necessary consequence of their faith in Christ and union with Him ; their faith works by love and overcomes the world ; Christ is made of God unto them sanctification ; he that is in Christ is a new man, created after God in righteousness and true holiness ; and he that abideth in Christ, and Christ in him, bringeth forth much fruit ; fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life (1 Cor. i. 30 ; Eph. iv. 24 ; John xv. 5 ; Rom. vi. 22). *e.* The sanctification of the believer is the necessary result of the energy and operation in him of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. i. 7 ; Eph. ii. 21, 22 ; Gal. v. 16-25). *f.* Finally, that sanctification is necessary,

<sup>1</sup> *In Dict. Pauli*, No. 6.

appears from the very nature of salvation. Salvation is deliverance, not so much from guilt and condemnation, as from the love and power and practice of sin. A sinner is not saved by being pardoned; he is pardoned that he may be saved; and he is saved when he is fully delivered from sin and made holy as God is holy. When that is attained, he receives the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul. Without this he cannot see God; without this he cannot enter heaven; without this he would be unfit to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. If a man, then, is to be saved in the full sense of that word, it must be by his being sanctified wholly, and by his "whole spirit and soul and body being preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23).

We may add that holiness is necessary to a man's being useful as a power for good in the world. It is only thus that the Christian can make his light shine before men, so that they, seeing his good works, may glorify his Father who is in heaven. It is the holy man who will be the most efficient good-doer in the world; who will be the most zealous for God and for the good of his fellow-men; who will exert the best influence on those around him; who will do most to raise others from what is degrading, debasing, and carnalizing to the pursuit of the true, the pure, and the godlike. As has been justly said, "The light of intellect is far less valuable and truly beautiful than the light of moral purity; and it is only when the fires of the former are directed and governed by the latter that they bring either good to men or glory to God."<sup>1</sup>

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[At page 221, vol. ii., it will be found that Dr. Alexander proposed to consider the subject of Soteriology under four principal heads: First, What God does *for* us and *apart from* us for our salvation; second, What God does *upon* us and *in* us to secure and advance our salvation; third, What God enables us *to do for ourselves* in the matter of our salvation; and fourth, What God secures to us as the result of our final triumph and the consummation of our salvation. The first of

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*.

these has been discussed under the head of Election, and the second under that of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. As it has not been considered advisable to extend the present work beyond two volumes, the lectures under the third and fourth heads (which would fill an additional volume) have to be omitted; but a brief outline of their contents is here given. Under the third head, which he entitled "The Means of Grace," Dr. Alexander considered the following subjects: 1. The Word of God; 2. the Sacraments; 3. Worship; and 4. Activity. As these means "were appointed to be used in connection with the institution denominated the *Church of God*, embracing those for whom they are principally designed and adapted," he introduced the subject of the means of grace by an inquiry into the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Church. In one of his introductory lectures to theology, indeed, he embraced the whole subject of the means of grace under this latter designation—or Ecclesiology. Under the fourth head he discussed the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Last Things, or Eschatology, his lectures under this head consisting chiefly of an exposition of 1 Cor. xv.—ED.]

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3. Different designations of theology.
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  - (3.) That all the statements of Scripture are to be held as presenting the mind of God.
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## PART I.—THEOLOGY.

### Chapter I. Pp. 19-25.

#### Preliminary—THE RELATIONS OF NATURAL AND BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

1. Both lead to the conclusion that it is only partially and by analogy that we can apprehend God.
2. While God is known in nature and

revelation by analogy and anthropomorphism, the Bible furnishes a just basis for these in the constitution of man.

3. Both nature and revelation declare the distinction of God from the world.
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1. Attributes of God not qualities superadded to the Divine Essence.
2. Divine attributes not really distinct from each other.
3. Method by which we acquire a knowledge of divine attributes.
4. Classification of attributes.

##### i. Natural perfections of God.

- (i.) Protensive existence:
  1. Eternal existence.
  2. Unchangeableness.
- (ii.) Extensive existence—omnipresence, etc.
- (iii.) Intensive existence:

<sup>1</sup> This table is designed to give a synoptical view of the whole work in the logical connection of all its parts. The signs I. (1.), i. (1.), 1 (1), a (a), indicate divisions and sub-divisions, each of which in successive order marks a division or head of that which precedes it. (1.) is used only in Parts III. and IV. The heads of "preliminary" sections are indicated by 1 (1) only.

1. Infinitude of being.
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  - (1.) Declared in Scripture,
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    - b. In respect to all the conditions of God's creatures,
    - c. In respect to all the thoughts and actions of men,
    - d. In respect to all things future, past, and present;
  - (2.) Can be contemplated only negatively by the human mind;
  - (3.) Is eternal;
  - (4.) Is precise and minute as well as vast and all-embracing;
  - (5.) Has been distinguished by divines as
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    - b. *Scientia libera*,
    - c. *Scientia media*.
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    - (1.) Most true;
    - (2.) Most certain and distinct;
    - (3.) Intuitive, immediate, pure.
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  4. As regards the distinction in the one Godhead, it is real and eternal, and is marked by certain properties peculiar to each Person, and not communicable. These properties are either internal or external. The internal are personal acts and notions, the former being
    - (1.) That the Father generates the Son, etc., and breathes the Spirit.
    - (2.) That the Son is begotten of the Father, and with the Father breathes the Spirit.
    - (3.) That the Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son.
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    - (1.) Unbegottenness and paternity as peculiar to the Father.
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2. Though sinful acts are various and diverse, they are all classed under the head of sins.
3. The question as to what constitutes transgression of the law an evil is one we feel impelled to try and answer.
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    - (i.) Its reality.
    - (ii.) The sense in which Christ is a Priest.
  - (iii.) The characteristics of Christ's priesthood:
    - 1. It was of divine authority and appointment.
    - 2. It is peculiar, intransferrable, and unchanging.
    - 3. Christ's priestly work has been done once for all.
    - 4. It is ever operative and efficient.

## Chapter X. Pp. 447-487.

## (II.) PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS.

- i. SACRIFICE.
  - (i.) *The divine origin of sacrifice.*
    - 1. Reason excludes all other sources of the practice. The universal prevalence of sacrifice can be accounted for only by one of two suppositions:

- (1.) That it has been dictated by some conviction common to all mankind. Hypothesis of the rational human origin of sacrifice.
  - a. Sacrifice may have originally been presented as a gift to the Deity.
  - b. It may have arisen out of the idea of a friendly meal shared by the offerer and the Deity.
  - c. It may have been a federal rite.
- (2.) That sacrifice had its origin in some universally recognized authoritative appointment.
  - a. Such authority could not have resided in any priestly body of men, because
    - (a) Sacrifices were known and practised long before priesthood became a profession.
    - (b) Any benefit accruing to priests from sacrifice was insufficient to induce them to invent and inculcate such a usage.
    - (c) Even supposing some priests had invented sacrifice, this will not account for its universality.
  - b. The supposition of priestcraft as the source of sacrifice being excluded, the only other is that of a common father of the race, who could have derived it only from God.
2. The divine origin of Sacrifice proved from Scripture.
  - (1.) The divine approval of sacrifices.
  - (2.) Probable origin of sacrifice in the time of Adam.
  - (3.) Nothing in the Mosaic institute to indicate that sacrifice was newly appointed under it.
  - (4.) The view that sacrifice originated in the time of Adam best accounts for its existence and its transmission to his posterity.
- (ii.) *The Meaning and Import of Sacrifice.*
  1. *The Sacrifices of the Heathen.*
    - (1.) The idea of propitiation conspicuous in heathen sacrifices.
    - (2.) The vicarious character of heathen sacrifices, shown especially in the prominence given to a. the blood, and b. to the willingness of the victim.
    - (3.) The offering in sacrifice regarded as a gift to the gods.
  2. *Patriarchal Sacrifices.*
    - (1.) The sacrifice of Abel, which was—
      - a. Propitiatory, and
      - b. Had respect to the sacrifice of Christ.
    - (2.) Noah's sacrifice:
      - a. The oblation was exclusively an animal sacrifice.
      - b. The animals offered were ritually clean.
      - c. The offering was a burnt-offering.
      - d. The offering was acceptable to God.
    - (3.) The offering of Isaac by Abraham:
      - a. Objections to the view that Isaac was a type of Christ, and the substituted ram a type of the intermediate sacrifices of the Jewish economy:
        - (a) The Mosaic sacrifices being themselves typical, this view would make the ram the type of a type.
        - (b) If Isaac represented Christ, then Isaac must have represented God, who freely gave His Son, and received Him as a sacrifice; whereas Abraham, in obedience to a command, offered his son as a sacrifice.
        - (c) Isaac was exempt from being sacrificed, whereas Christ was actually sacrificed.
        - b. The true typical character of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac:
          - (a) Isaac represented the Church of God.
          - (b) As his life was forfeited, so was that of the Church.
          - (c) As his life was saved by a substitute of God's own providing, so is the Church saved in like manner.
          - (d) As the ram saved Isaac by being his substitute, so Christ saves men by being their substitute.
    - (4.) The sacrifices of Job:
      - a. They were propitiatory.
      - b. They were offered by Job as a priest interceding for his friends.

## VOL. II.

## Chapter XI. Pp. 1-21.

## SACRIFICE—Continued.

3. *Mosaic Sacrifices.*
  - (1.) Sacrificial offerings:
    - a. The burnt-offering.
    - b. The sin-offering.
    - c. The Passover:
      - (a) The "sparing."
      - (b) The sprinkling.
      - (c) Connection of the Passover with the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt.
      - (d) The typical reference of the Passover to the deliverance to be brought by the Messiah.
  - (2.) Mosaic sacrifices—their character and purpose.
    - a. They occupied the place of a divine institute.
    - b. They enabled men to draw nigh to God.
    - c. They had to do with sin.

- d. They made propitiation on account of sin.
- e. They were expiatory or propitiatory by being vicarious. Proofs and illustrations of this:—
  - (a) The cases of detected murder and of homicide.
  - (b) The ceremonial on the great day of Atonement.
  - (c) All cases in which hands were laid on the head of the victim.
  - (d) The word used to indicate the offering of a sacrifice.
  - (e) The prominence given to the "blood," in which is the "life" or "soul," in sacrifice.
  - (f) The sacrifice which expiated for the sinner was his representative as well as his substitute.

## Chapter XII. Pp. 21-36.

4. *Theories of Sacrifice.*

- (1.) The theory of sacrifice as a gift.
- (2.) The theory of sacrifice as involving an actual transference of guilt.
- (3.) The theory of sacrifice as being merely symbolical, of which there are four forms:—
  - a. That sacrifice was a symbol of reconciliation between God and man by being of the nature of a friendly meal, to which there are the objections:
    - (a) Admitting that part of every sacrifice was eaten by the worshipper, it was not eaten at the altar, but in his own dwelling.
    - (b) It was not the case that of all sacrifices offered a part was eaten by the offerer and his friends.
    - (c) In the case of the most important of all sacrifices, the burnt-offering, no part was eaten by the offerer.
  - b. The theory that sacrifice was a symbol of the abolition of sin and the reunion of the sinner with God, to which there are the objections—
    - (a) That the repeated declaration of Scripture is that reconciliation was made by sacrifice.
    - (b) If sacrifice was a symbol of reconciliation already made, it is difficult to see the use of it.
  - c. The theory that sacrifice was a symbol of man's return to God in penitence and self-consecration.
  - d. The theory of sacrifice as a gift whereby man endeavoured to make his imperfect consecration of himself to God complete.
- (4.) Attempt to construct a just theory of sacrifice:
  - a. The facts of the case are those connected with man's relation as a sinner to God as Moral Governor.
  - b. Entire and unqualified consecration to God is the first and essential requisite in religion.
  - c. But in the case of the sinner this would mean yielding himself to the penalty of death denounced by God against sin.
  - d. The only way of escape from the penalty is the acceptance by God of something in lieu of the penalty that shall answer the same ends as would be answered by the infliction of it.
  - e. The question being one belonging to law, which views men as elements of one organic whole, if the ends of law be secured by something done by all or only one of that whole, the result is the same.
  - f. Hence emerges the doctrine of substitution, according to which a pure being voluntarily submitting to death may secure the pardon of those who had incurred that penalty.
  - g. By the intimation to our first parents of a Perfect Substitute, through whom all barriers to man's consecration of himself to God would be removed, there was provided a basis for a religious life.
  - h. In order to secure the preservation of these truths, sacrifice was instituted to represent in a scenic form the principles of religion in relation to a sinful creature, and by which men were reminded—
    - (a) That sin is a terrible evil;
    - (b) That death is the penalty of sin;
    - (c) That through a vicarious satisfaction to the law by means of a victim which God would accept, sin could be forgiven; and
    - (d) That the law being satisfied, reconciliation is effected between God and the sinner.
- 5. *The apprehension by the Jewish people of the truths represented in sacrifice.*
  - (1.) A pious Jew would naturally inquire what was specifically set forth in sacrifice.
  - (2.) Inasmuch as the ancient sacrifices are declared in the New Testament to have been a type of Christ, they could have been so only as they were so understood by those beholding them.
  - (3.) The large number of priests not engaged in the temple service would seem to imply that their function was to instruct the people in the law, and therefore concerning the meaning of its precepts.

- (4.) The prophets "gave witness" to Christ, and it may be assumed they did this by instructing the people concerning the intimations of Him given in sacrificial observances.
- (5.) The Old Testament saints received the forgiveness of sins for which the Mosaic institute provided no expiation, and this could therefore have been only on the ground of that atonement which it prefigured.

#### Chapter XIII. Pp. 37-50.

- (iii.) *The Sacrifice of Christ.*
1. *Its relation to Ancient Sacrifices.*
  - (1.) The death of Christ accomplished in reality that which the ancient sacrifices only represented symbolically—the taking away of sin by a substitutionary propitiation.
    - a. The death of Christ is represented in Scripture as an event having an important purpose.
    - b. The end of Christ's death had reference to man's benefit.
    - c. It was designed to benefit man by taking away sin.
    - d. Christ took away sin by having it imputed to Him, and bearing the punishment due to it.
    - e. The special benefits represented as accruing to men through Christ are redemption from sin and reconciliation to God.
  - (2.) In the death of Christ there was an actual accomplishment of all that was predicted by Jewish sacrifices.
    - a. Passages in which Christ is said to have given Himself as a "ransom-price" for men.
    - b. Passages in which believers are represented as being "bought with a price."
    - c. Passages in which our Lord's work on behalf of men is spoken of as a propitiation.
    - d. Passages in which believers are said to be "partakers" of Christ's death.
  2. *Names of Christ bearing on His Sacrificial Work :*
    - (1.) Saviour.
    - (2.) Captain or Author of salvation.
    - (3.) "He that sanctifieth."
    - (4.) Mediator.
    - (5.) Shepherd.

#### Chapter XIV. Pp. 50-84.

3. *Phrases descriptive of the Work of Christ :*
  - (1.) Lamb of God.
  - (2.) Ransom-price.
  - (3.) A Curse.
  - (4.) Sin.
  - (5.) Surety, Propitiation, Peace.

#### 4. *Phrases designating the Design and Effect of the Work of Christ :*

- (1.) "For us."
- (2.) "For sins."
- (3.) Bearing and removing sin.
5. *Expressions setting forth the Benefits accruing to men from the Work of Christ :*
  - (1.) Acceptance with God.
  - (2.) Redemption.
  - (3.) Reconciliation, which includes the removal of obstacles to harmony with God, not only on the part of men, but also of God Himself.
    - a. The absence of statements to the effect that God is reconciled to man is accounted for by the fact that He is the Author of reconciliation.
    - b. Reconciliation of God to men is implied in the frequent statement that the anger of God is turned away by Christ.
    - c. The statement that our reconciliation to God is a bringing nigh of those afar off from Him implies obstacles to reconciliation on the part of God.
    - d. The emphasis laid on the death of Christ can be explained only on the assumption that the obstacles to reconciliation were of a judicial kind.
    - e. The references to reconciliation as a boon conferred by God indicate that there was something requiring to be removed on the part of God.
    - f. The argument that in Rom. v. 10 man's enmity to God is implied is inconclusive.
    - g. The passages in the N. T. in which "reconciliation" occurs are such as usually determine the meaning of it to be the removal of obstacles on the part of God.
    - h. The foregoing conclusions do not exclude the moral influence of Christ's death in drawing men to God.
  6. *The testimony of non-evangelical theologians* in support of the Scripture doctrine of the propitiatory merits of Christ as a sacrifice to God offered for men's sin.

#### Chapter XV. Pp. 84-101.

- (iv.) *Theories of Christ's Sacrifice—The Atonement.*
1. *History of Opinion.*
    - (1.) Opinions of the Fathers.
    - (2.) The view of Anselm, and its influence on succeeding theologians.
    - (3.) The view of Grotius, and the modification of Anselm's view involved in it.

- (4.) Summary of opinions since the time of Grotius; every theory since then proceeds on one or other of the following assumptions:—

- a. That the death of Christ was a satisfaction to God's justice for man's sin.
- b. That it was a ground or reason in the divine government on which sin could be forgiven.
- c. That it exerts so powerful a moral influence on men as to draw them from sin to God.

Chapter XVI. Pp. 101-112.

2. *Principal Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

(1.) *The Hyper-Calvinistic Theory:*

- a. Statement of the theory: That the work of Christ was of the nature of a price paid for the release of man from penalties he had incurred.
- b. Statements and arguments adduced in explanation and support of the theory.
- (a) The statements of Scripture of a transference of men's punishment to Christ.
- (b) Christ endured all the punishment of sin due to us in the curse and sanction of the law.
- (c) When God condemns sin, He condemns it in the very punishment due to the sinner.
- (d) The whole penalty of sin is death, which Christ endured for us.
- (e) In being made sin for us lay the very punishment of our sin upon Christ.
- (f) His sufferings are so described as to indicate that He suffered what was threatened to sin.
- (g) The benefits of the death of Christ are restricted to His own people only.
- (h) For whom Christ died, for them He is sponsor, to free them from guilt.
- (i) For whom Christ died, for them only does He intercede.
- (j) For whom Christ died, for them only He merited grace and glory, etc.
- (k) He died only for those whom God gave Him to be saved.
- (l) Those for whom Christ died are those whom alone the Father loved, and was pleased to endow with spiritual blessings.
- c. Chief objections to this theory:
  - (a) That it is incompatible with the infinite value of the Saviour's propitiatory work.
  - (b) That it is inconsistent with those passages which state that Christ

was a propitiation for the sins of the world.

- (c) That the salvation of the non-elect becomes a natural impossibility.
- (d) That the invitations of the gospel are without an adequate basis.

Chapter XVII. Pp. 112-120.

(2.) *Arminian or Remonstrant Theory.*

- a. Summary of the views of Arminius and the Dutch Remonstrants:
  - (a) Christ died for all and each in such a way that His death is not only sufficient in itself in virtue of its intrinsic worth, but it was efficiently offered for all and each, so that by means of it God may act graciously towards the human race.
  - (b) Christ obtained for all and each restitution into a state of grace and salvation, so that no one shall be obnoxious to condemnation on account of original sin.
  - (c) Christ endured death for all without any definite purpose of saving any one.
  - (d) Christ obtained certainly salvation for no one, but only acquired for the Father plenary will and power to act with men *de novo*, and to prescribe what conditions He pleased, the fulfilment of which conditions depends on the free will of man.
  - (e) The imputation of the death of Christ extends beyond the application of it.
- b. Arguments in support of the Remonstrant theory:
  - (a) Scripture expressly declares in many passages that Christ died for all men.
  - (b) Scripture expressly states that Christ's work had for its object the saving of the world, etc., which is incompatible with any limitation of those on whose behalf He suffered.
  - (c) Christ said He came to seek and save the "lost," which is incompatible with the view that He came to save only a part of the lost.
  - (d) In some passages the possibility of some perishing for whom Christ died is contemplated, and consequently Christ's death had respect to others than the elect who shall be saved.
  - (e) Scripture calls on all men to believe on Christ as an imperative duty, but we can believe in Him as a Saviour only as we regard His propitiatory work as valid for our salvation.



- (f) If Christ did not die for all men, no one can be condemned for unbelief.

c. Objections to some of the arguments in support of the Remonstrant theory:

- (a) In the argument based on the assumption that faith in Christ means faith that He died for us, and that such faith cannot be demanded except on the assumption that He died for us, it is overlooked that the warrant for faith is not our knowledge of what Christ did, but God's assurance that on the ground of what He did all who believe on Him shall be saved.
- (b) While the Arminian theory does justice to the statements of Scripture respecting the relation of Christ's death to all men, it overlooks or sets aside the statements which declare that Christ "gave" Himself for some in a sense in which He did not give Himself for all, and in which there is a special reference to these in His atonement.
- (c) Was the atonement made for sin or for sinners?
- (d) The answers of the one party would be that the atonement is to be referred wholly to the sovereign love of God,—that He determined to save a certain number, and in order to this provided the atonement; and that the atonement was not so much for sin as for sinners. The answers of the other party would be that the atonement is to be traced to the rectoral love of God, who devised the atonement as a means of manifesting His righteousness, being thus made for sin rather than for sinners, and that God is free to apply its benefits to all whom He is pleased to choose.
- d. Remarks on the foregoing distinctions.
- (a) It is admitted on both sides that the work of Christ is of infinite sufficiency, but that its actual efficiency is determined by the purpose of God.
- (b) The specific purposed design of Christ was the salvation of His own people, but its aspect to the world at large is ecclastic.
- (c) This double reference of divine actings is seen in other of God's works.
- (d) Christ Jesus having, admittedly, appeared, acted, and suffered as a substitute for men, He could have been so only for those actually saved.
- (e) The representation in Scripture of Christ's sufferings as a price paid for the salvation of man leads to the same conclusion.
- (f) As God purposes only what He actually does, and as what He actually does is to save His people through the atonement, this must be regarded as His main design in providing it.
- (g) On the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement, it is not easy to see the necessity for the continuous agency of Christ on behalf of His people.
- (h) The view adopted—that the work of Christ, though of infinite value, and having many important ends to answer in the divine administration, was yet in its original purpose and main design intended to secure the redemption of Christ's own people.
- c. General propositions regarding the twofold aspect of Christ's work.
- (a) The work of Christ has a general and a special design.
- (b) In the former it had respect to all men; in the latter, to the elect.

Chapter XVIII. Pp. 120-138.

- (3.) *Moderate Calvinistic theories*, of which there are two principal forms, the one of which is that God, having of His sovereign grace determined to save a certain number of the human race, devised the atonement as the means of attaining that end; and the other, that God having in His rectoral capacity devised the atonement as a means of reconciling His mercy and His righteousness, did as a Sovereign determine to limit the universal remedy in its application to such only as it was His good pleasure to bring unto salvation.

a. Opinions of theologians under the former head.

b. Opinions under the latter.

c. Statement of the questions at issue between the two parties.

- (a) Is the atonement, both in its general design and special design, to be traced wholly to the sovereign love of God, or are we to distinguish between God as a ruler and as a sovereign, and refer the design of the atonement to Him as a ruler, and the application of it to His sovereignty?

- (b.) Did the devising of the atonement precede, or did it follow, in the order of nature, the purpose of God to save a certain number of the human race?

- (c) The former respects God as the moral Governor of all; the latter respects God as the gracious Father of His people.
- (d) The former respects the covenant of grace; the latter respects the covenant of redemption.
- (e) In virtue of the former, God continues to the race providential blessings forfeited by sin, the benefits of Christianity in its outward influences and social bearings; in virtue of the latter, God confers upon those whom He has chosen faith, repentance, pardon, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.
- (f) In virtue of the former, all men may be freely invited to come to Christ, because there is sufficiency in His atoning work to meet the case of all; in virtue of the latter, believers may be exhorted to confidence, gratitude, and obedience.

## Chapter XIX. Pp. 138-164.

(4.) *Recent theories of the sacrifice of Christ.*

- a. The Socinian theory.
- b. Theory of the design of Christ's work as a revelation to men of God the Father.
- c. Theory of Dr. McLeod Campbell—that Christ atoned for man's sin by making it His own, and by a sincere and adequate repentance making expiation for it.
- (a) It rests on two assumptions which are unintelligible—that Christ was identified with humanity, and that He made confession of man's sin with deep contrition and sincere repentance.
- (b) Admitting these assumptions, they furnish no expiation for sin.
- (c) If the sufferings of Christ were not propitiatory, they cannot be regarded as commending God's love to us.
- (d) On this theory it is impossible to account for the suffering and death of Christ.
- d. Theory of Dr. Bushnell—that God, by an act of self-sacrifice, was enabled to be at one with the sinner and forgive him; that forgiveness is obtained only when sin is remitted; and that remission of sin is not the cancelling of guilt, but the utter removal of sin from the sinner.
- (a) The view of remission of sins involved in this theory is unscriptural.
- (b) The assumption of the theory that "to justify" means to make

morally good is also unsupported by Scripture.

- (c) The theory wholly mistakes the nature of that which needed to be removed or sin could be remitted, and God and the sinner reconciled.
- (d) It inverts the *ordo salutis* by representing sanctification as preceding justification, which is unscriptural.
- (e) It involves a denial of the necessity of divine influence in regeneration and sanctification, by representing the influence of Christ as operating directly through ordinary channels.
- e. Theory of Mr. Maurice—that Christ was identified with humanity, and that His work was one great act of self-sacrifice to illustrate the principle of self-sacrifice as due to God by all His intelligent creatures, and constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings.
- (a) Self-sacrifice has no moral value apart from the end of it.
- (b) The end of Christ's self-sacrifice being, according to the theory, the mere endurance of the pains of sacrifice, it is resolved into a mere example of suffering as an end in itself—both of which are unscriptural.
- f. Theory of Mr. F. Robertson—that Christ, as a partaker of humanity, suffered by coming into conflict with evil, and by His suffering overcame it.
- (a) Christ could not both have been overcome (or "torn in pieces") by evil, and have overcome it.
- (b) The sufferings of Christ being, according to the theory, such as came upon Him necessarily in His conflict with evil, there was nothing extraordinary in them.
- (c) The assumption of the theory, that evil can be crushed only by suffering from it, is supported by neither reason nor Scripture.
- (d) It is a misconception of the work of Christ to represent its primary end as the overcoming of evil.
- (e) The theory does not show in what way the sufferings of Christ were conducive to deliverance from evil.

## Chapter XX. Pp. 165-176.

3. *Principles upon which a theory of the sacrifice of Christ may be constructed.*

- (1.) God, as the moral Governor of the universe, must always act in a manner perfectly consistent with

- Himself, and with that government which is but an expression of Himself.
- (2.) Sin being abhorrent to His nature and a transgression of His law, He must ever act with regard to it so as to manifest His abhorrence of sin, and to uphold the stability and honour of His government.
  - (3.) God is no less under obligation, from the perfection of His nature, to pity the sinner.
  - (4.) We may therefore conclude that God will interpose for man's deliverance.
  - (5.) Though it is not competent for us to determine in what way the mercy of God is to be reconciled with His abhorrence of sin and with His obligations to uphold His own law, it is possible for us to fix on certain conditions without which such reconciliation cannot be effected, such as—
    - a. That the mercy of God must be so exercised as to preserve entire the honour and authority of the law which has been broken.
    - b. That some adequate compensation must be made on behalf of the sinner which shall uphold the honour and authority of the law; and
    - c. That such adequate compensation can be made only through the vicarious agency of another.
  - (6.) All these conditions are fulfilled in the person and work of Christ.

#### Chapter XXI. Pp. 176-187.

4. *The Moral Influence of the sacrifice of Christ.*
- (1.) Its accordance with man's deepest moral convictions.
- (2.) The view it gives of God fitted to influence man powerfully for good.
- (3.) The view it gives of the love of Christ calculated powerfully to affect the heart and lead to salvation.
- (4.) The view it gives of the evil of sin and the necessity of holiness fitted to exert a powerful moral influence on man.
5. *Summary of inferences respecting the Atonement:*
- (1.) As to the nature of the atonement;
- (2.) As to its necessity; and
- (3.) As to those for whose benefit it was made, in respect of its
  - a. Sufficiency, and in respect of its
  - b. Design.

#### Chapter XXII. Pp. 187-198.

- ii. THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.
- (i.) *Priestly intercession in the Mosaic dispensation.*
- (ii.) *Christ's intercession.*
  1. The fact of it, as declared in Scripture.
  2. The nature of the intercession.
  3. For whom Christ intercedes.
  4. He is the only Intercessor.

#### Chapter XXIII. Pp. 198-212.

- II. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.
- III. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.
- i. The relation of Christ's kingdom to His priesthood.
- ii. The distinction of His kingship from His divine sovereignty.
- iii. The kingdom of Christ, as,
  - (i.) In its general administration, embracing the universe;
  - (ii.) In its special administration, identified with His Church, of which Christ is
    1. The Founder,
    2. Ruler, and
    3. Protector.
- (iii.) The spirituality of Christ's kingdom.
- (iv.) Its relation to earthly states or kingdoms.
- (v.) The consummation of the kingdom of Christ.

### PART IV.—SOTERIOLOGY.

#### FIRST DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

##### Chapter I. 213-221.

##### Preliminary—

1. *The Nature of Salvation.*
- (1.) It consists in the restoration of man to God's favour, and likeness to Him.
- (2.) Three things necessary to this:
  - a. The remission of Adam's guilt to the race.
  - b. The remission of sins to the individual sinner, and his acceptance into the divine favour.
  - c. The restoration of the sinner to the divine likeness.
2. *The Conditions of Salvation.*
- (1.) Man's salvation must come from God; for
  - a. The evils from which man suffers are such as to preclude his salvation originating with himself.
  - b. The removal of these evils involves action on the part of God, which only He Himself can determine.
  - c. The work of moral renovation must be the work of God.
- (2.) The methods pursued in accomplishing the salvation of man

must be such as shall do no violence to his natural constitution.

### Chapter II. Pp. 221-228.

#### I. THE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD, which is shown in

- i. The divine compassion for man.
- ii. The desire of God for the salvation of man.
- iii. The mission of His Son to men.
- iv. In the sparing of the race, and the preservation of the capacity for moral improvement and restoration.

### Chapter III. Pp. 228-236.

#### II. THE SPECIAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

##### (I.) ELECTION.

##### i. *Classification of Opinions.* Opinions of

- (i.) The Socinians and Lower Arminians.
- (ii.) The High Calvinists.
- (iii.) The Evangelical Arminians.
- (iv.) The Moderate Calvinists.

##### ii. *The Election of Israel.* Inferences from passages—

- (i.) That Israel enjoyed peculiar privileges, and were the objects of a special love.
- (ii.) These privileges and this love were common to all Israel.
- (iii.) The blessings thus conferred, and the love thus shown, were all in consequence of an act of choice on the part of God.
- (iv.) This choice was altogether sovereign.

### Chapter IV. Pp. 237-285.

#### (II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS. Inferences from passages:

- i. Believers stand in a peculiar and endeared relation to God.
- ii. This special relation is the result of a choice or election of them by Him.
- iii. This election is eternal.
- iv. It is a choice of believers "in Christ."
- v. The election is purely sovereign. The opinion that it has its ground in God's foresight of the faith and obedience of certain persons is exposed to the following objections:—
- (i.) It cannot be reconciled with the terms in Scripture affirming the perfect gratuitousness of election.
- (ii.) It is irreconcilable with those passages which represent faith, piety, and holiness as ends contemplated in the election of believers.
- (iii.) It is inconsistent with the representation in Scripture of election as a difficult and mysterious subject.

sentation in Scripture of election as a difficult and mysterious subject.

- (iv.) It leads to Pelagianism, by making the act of man determine his own salvation.

- (v.) If this opinion be correct, it is difficult to understand to *what* the subjects of faith and obedience are elected.

- vi. The divine purpose in election had respect to the actual salvation of those elected.

##### (i.) Proof passages.

- (ii.) The opinion and arguments of those who hold that election is not to actual salvation, but to the means and opportunity of obtaining it:

1. Argument from the analogy between the ancient Israel and the people of God.

2. Argument that salvation being dependent on the right use of means, election can only be to these means.

##### (iii.) Objections to this view:

1. It is incompatible with those statements of Scripture which represent salvation as an evidence of election, and

2. With those statements which represent heaven as a place prepared from eternity for the people of Christ.

3. No difficulties are removed, or advantages gained, by adopting this view.

- vii. The divine election is an election of persons, and not of communities or nations.

- viii. In election God had respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.

- (i.) Theological dogmas arising from this distinction.

##### (ii.) Proof passages.

##### (iii.) Summary of their testimony:

1. They teach nothing incompatible with the doctrine that it is only for sin that men are doomed to perdition.

2. There is nothing in them to show that God operates directly on the minds of any to cause them to be sinful.

3. There is nothing in them supporting the doctrine that God decrees the ruin of any on the ground of their foreseen guilt.

4. There is no ground in them for the doctrine of a decree of preterition in reference to the unsaved.

5. What it is that God decrees in the case of the unsaved.

### Chapter V. Pp. 286-296.

#### ix. *General Observations.*

- (i.) Divine foreknowledge is founded upon divine predestination.
- (ii.) Divine election is involved in the covenant of redemption.
- (iii.) The turning-point of the question between Calvinists and Arminians—Does the actual salvation of any sinner originate with himself or with God?

x. *The Practical Uses of the Doctrine of Election.*

- (i.) Election not to be so conceived as to be confounded with fatalism.
- (ii.) It is in its practical bearings that the doctrine is referred to in Scripture, viz.:
  1. As a motive to gratitude.
  2. As enforcing humility.
  3. As a strong inducement to practical godliness.
  4. As a support under temptation, etc.

Chapter VI. Pp. 296-306.

SECOND DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN ITS FULFILMENT.

I. THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- i. *Names given to the Holy Spirit.*
- (i.) The meaning of the term "Spirit" in the Scriptures.
- (ii.) The adjuncts by which this term is more clearly defined in Scripture:
  1. "Spirit of God."
  2. "Spirit of Christ."
  3. "Holy Spirit."

Chapter VII. Pp. 306-318.

- ii. *The Deity of the Holy Spirit.*
- (i.) The "Holy Spirit" and "Spirit of God" used interchangeably in Scripture.
- (ii.) Divine Omniscience ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
- (iii.) Boundless Power ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
- (iv.) The Holy Spirit is joined with the Father and the Son as the object of religious worship.
- (v.) The Holy Spirit is represented as being sinned against by men.
- (vi.) The Holy Spirit is represented as the author of spiritual gifts to men.
- (vii.) Objections to the Deity of the Holy Spirit:

1. That so little is said in Scripture of the adoration or worship of the Spirit.
2. That He is represented as being subordinate to the Father and the Son, as proceeding from them, and sent by them.

Chapter VIII. Pp. 319-329.

- ii. *The Relation of the Spirit to the*

*Father and the Son: The Procession of the Spirit.*

- (i.) History of the dogma.
- (ii.) Objections to the dogma.

Chapter IX. Pp. 329-343.

II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- (I.) THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN NATURE.
- (II.) THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION.
  - i. *Extraordinary Operations of the Spirit—Inspiration.*
  - (i.) The divinity of the Scriptures lies in the substance of their contents, and not in the words in which these are expressed.
  - (ii.) The divine control was exercised so as not to supersede the peculiar mental and personal characteristics of each writer.
  - (iii.) The divine aid given to the sacred writers was not such as to raise them above the prevailing notions of their time on matters outside religion.
  - (iv.) The writers, except when they formally announce a message from God, write like men expressing what was in their own consciousness.
  - (v.) In consequence of the predominant subjectivity of the writers, their statements of doctrine are sometimes partial, though always reconcilable with each other.
  - (vi.) In regard to matters of fact and history, discrepancies of statement between the different writers, and sometimes in the writers of the same author, are to be found in Scripture.
  - (vii.) Conclusion based on the foregoing considerations: that the inspiration of the sacred writers is the result of the acting of the Divine Spirit on their minds so as to leave them free to utter what was in their minds, yet so as to preserve them from making any statement inconsistent with the purpose for which the Bible was written.

Chapter X. Pp. 343-361.

ii. *The Ordinary Operations of the Spirit.*

- (i.) Divine influence Common and special grace.
  1. The Arminian doctrine.
  2. The Calvinistic doctrine.
  3. The relation of the Divine Word and Spirit in their operations on men's minds.
- (1.) The word of God is not to be re-

- garded as impotent to effect that for which it is sent forth, but
- (2.) Scripture distinctly asserts that it is in itself sufficient to accomplish the end for which it is designed.
  - (3.) The word, to be effectual, must be applied so as to produce the result intended by it.
  - (4.) No additional power is given to the word itself so as to effect man's salvation.
  - (5.) The work of the Spirit is not in giving added power to the word, but in removing from the mind of man that which obstructs its operation.

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- (ii.) *The Design of the Spirit's Work: the ordo salutis.*
- (iii.) *The work of the Spirit in bringing men into Divine Sonship.*
  1. *Vocation or Calling.*
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  - (1.) Description of it in the New Testament.
- The relation of regeneration to repentance and conversion.

#### Chapter XIII. Pp. 385-406.

3. *Justification.*
  - (1.) Its nature.
    - a. The statements of Scripture regarding justification.
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- The distinction between universal and particular justification.
- (c) Both justification and the righteousness into which the sinner thereby enters are of a legal character.
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    - a. The statements of Scripture.
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ment of justification and the ground on which it is enjoyed.

- (a) Opinions of theologians:
  - a. That there was an *actual transference* of guilt to Christ, and of Christ's righteousness to the sinner.
  - b. That there was an *imputation* of the sin of men to Christ, and of the righteousness of Christ to men.
  - c. That men are *treated* as righteous for the sake of Christ.
  - d. That men are actually *made* righteous through Christ.
- (b) Remarks on these views, to the last of which there are the objections—
  - a. While professedly opposed to the doctrine of imputation, it can escape from it only by the supposition that justification is by works.
  - b. It overlooks the necessity of cancelling past guilt.
  - c. It implies that Christ had the germ of sin in Him in being made sin for us, even as (by the opinion) men are held to have the germ of righteousness by faith in Christ.
  - d. It is opposed to the doctrine of Scripture that the death of Christ is the ground of justification.

#### Chapter XIV. Pp. 407-428.

- (3.) *The Medium of Justification: Faith.*
  - a. The Nature of Faith.
  - b. The Object of Faith—the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (a) The equivalent expressions for faith in the N. T. indicate that it is an act implying desire, choice, acquiescence, trust.
- (b) Mere belief being simply a kind of knowledge, more than this is required for salvation.
- (c) The prominence given in the O. T. to trust in God as the quality of those held to be righteous.
- (d) The stress our Lord laid on faith on the part of those on whose behalf He performed miracles.
- (e) The example of Abraham's faith, which was essentially trust in God.
- c. What is implied in trust in Christ:
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- (b) Realizing His Person, Agency, and sufficiency as a Saviour.
- (c) An earnest desire for salvation.
- (d) Yielding to Christ, and reposing with implicit confidence in Him for salvation.

(4.) *Summary of Opinion on the Doctrine of Justification by Faith.*

- a. Views of theologians.
- b. Remarks on these :
- (a) Objection to the statement that reconciliation with God is effected by Christ fulfilling the law in the place of man.
- (b) Objection to the view of faith which is given as being merely an intellectual act.

## Chapter XV. Pp. 428-459.

4. *Sanctification.*

- (1.) Its nature.
  - a. It has a positive and negative side, the change involved in it being a loving pursuit of the good, and a renunciation of sin in the love and practice of it.
  - b. The change involved in it is universal.
  - c. The change is progressive.
  - d. Though ever tending to perfection, the process of sanctification is never completed on earth.
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*The numerals in capital letters indicate the Chapters, those in smaller letters the Volume, and the Arabic numerals the page of the volume.*

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